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THE

## NEED OF THE CHURCH.

BY REV. S. H. PLATT.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

REV. NATHAN BANGS, D. D.

THIRD EDITION.

## New-York:

PRINTED AND FOR SALE BY
CARLTON & PORTER, No. 200 MULBERRY-STREET,
AND BY THE AUTHOR,
NORTHVILLE, CONN.
1856.

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# My own Parents,

AND

THE PARENTS OF MY DEAR COMPANION,

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### INTRODUCTION.

THE subjects discussed in the following chapters are of great importance to mankind in general, and to the Church in particular. Religion is certainly a subject in which all mankind have the deepest interest, and the Church, as the instrument of diffusing this religion among the human family, ought, most assuredly, to possess and exemplify it in an eminent degree. For how can she diffuse light, faith, and love, unless she possesses them? And the brighter this light shines, the more vigorous this faith acts, and the higher this flame of love rises, the more will their influence be felt on the community around us. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that the members of this Church should possess and exemplify these Christian graces in all their purity and vigor, and let their enlightening and expansive influence be seen and felt wherever they live and move. Hence says our Saviour, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

These are the topics chiefly insisted upon in the following pages. If the author has erred in anything, it is in having drawn so gloomy a picture of the state of religion in the Church, though even in this he seems to be borne out by his statement of facts which cannot be easily controverted. And if his statements are well founded, and his arguments conclusive, they ought to impress on all concerned a deep sense of their high responsibility, and thus be a means of exciting them to a more zealous activity in the cause of men's salvation. They should, therefore, and doubtless will, lead to a serious and impartial examination of our own hearts, and if we find any evil within us, or about us, let us put it away, though it may be as dear to us as a right eye, or a right hand.

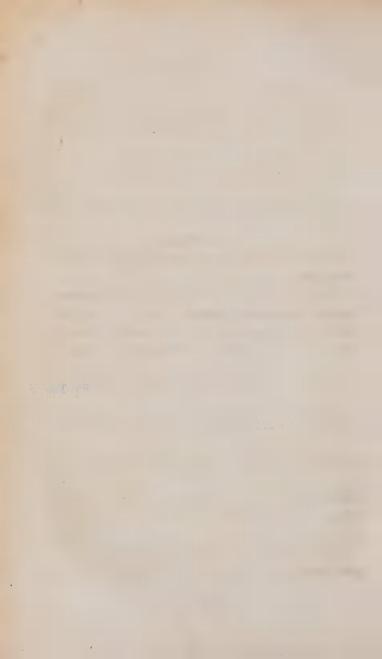
The statistical tables on which the author founds some of his arguments are very interesting, and the prospects of the future greatness, and consequent responsibility of the American nation, in which he indulges, present a pleasing anticipation to the believing Christian and the zealous patriot, of the rising glory of our country, and the important part she is to take in the enmancipation of mankind from the thraldom of sin. While, therefore, the present generation of Christians shall be excited to greater diligence in running the race set before them, "in striving after pure and perfect love, and in encouraging all others over whom they may have influence, to come to the Fountain of Living Waters, and drink of its refreshing streams, they may look forward through the vista of time, and joyfully anticipate that day when the knowledge of the Lord shall

cover the earth as the waters do the great deep." In the mean time, let the Church of Christ shake herself from the dust of carnal security, arise in the strength of her Divine Head, and go forth from conquering to conquest, and she shall win a victory worthy of her character—witness an achievement which will crown her with glory and honor, immortality and eternal life, as the final reward of her labors and sacrifices.

Believing these to be the objects the author aims to accomplish, I heartily recommend his book to the serious consideration of its readers.

N. BANGS.

New York, April 17th, 1856.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It is expected of authors, when presenting a new book to the public, to state some reasons for so doing.

When this was commenced it did not aspire to the pretensions of a book, but thought to go forth as a simple tract—embodying the thoughts of a sermon which the author had delivered a short time previously, and which he deemed to be of some importance to the Church. About that time he was compelled, in consequence of ill health, to leave his pastoral charge for a few weeks, and, with the prospect of a year of retirement from ministerial duties, the subject was suffered to expand until it has reached its present volume, in the hope that the original design—the good of the church—might be realized, and in addition, it might be of some pecuniary aid to the writer. If others publish for the sake of the good that may be accomplished, so do I; but I want money, too.

A family cannot be clothed and fed upon the spiritual good ministered to others. So that if the first object—

the good of others—is gained, I shall rejoice. If the second is also secured, I shall be thankful.

In regard to the execution of the work, I will not conceal my earnest conviction that the subject deserves a far better treatment, and, if this feeble effort should serve to enlist the energies of some abler mind in pursuit of the noble theme, some good will have been realized.

In palliation of some of its faults and in justice to myself, I ought to say, that it has been prepared in about six months, in addition to the care of a laborious charge, and amid interruptions of various kinds, among which may be mentioned, a protracted meeting of some ten weeks' duration, and the sickness and death of an only child. It will not be surprising, then, if the matter be found in a somewhat crude and undigested form; and if a shade of sadness should be marked in some of the views taken, its solution will readily be found in the state of the writer's feelings at the time. To parents who have been bereaved of their children, this will be a sufficient explanation.

In reference to the facts and statistics given, I have done the best that I could in the limited time at my command.

I have endeavored to make the estimates as reliable as possible, still there may be errors—probably, however, none that will materially affect the conclusions drawn from them. I have gleaned for facts from every available source that is deemed worthy of credit. To the National

Magazine, The Abstract of the Census, Lippincott's Gazetteer of the World; "The End," by Rev. John Cummings; The Methodist Almanac, The General Minutes, and Bangs's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I am mostly indebted.

With regard to the style I have little to say. Could more time have been devoted to it, it would doubtless have been different; but circumstances were such, that it became necessary to complete it before a given period, which has now arrived. Had it not been for this, instead of appearing in the uncouth form of the original draft, it would have exhibited greater care in its structure. As it is, the kind criticisms of competent men I shall receive with pleasure, and hope to profit by—but the senseless strictures of mere pretenders will be allowed to pass in silent contempt.

Now, kind reader, I leave the book with you. I have freely spoken what was in my heart; and if these honest utterances shall find a response in your bosom, may you profit by them; but, should you not endorse them, may you find something better—something that will lead you to the possession of the "power" which is promised, "after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

THE AUTHOR.



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#### CHAPTER I.

THE WORK OR DUTY OF THE CHURCH.

A GENERAL receives an order from his sovereign to go on a distant and dangerous expedition.

The question is at once propounded: "What do I need for this undertaking?" If his route lie through an enemy's territory, be crossed by numerous barriers, and defended by determined foes; and if it be barren of forage, and destitute of the means which may be made available for transportation, he must prepare himself accordingly. The work that he is to do also merits its share of consideration. If he is to attack the fleet horsemen of the plain, he needs cavalry for the enterprise. If he is to invest a fortress, he must have his train of siege guns, mortars, mining implements, etc., adapted to his design.

Thus it is with the Church of Christ! To know her need, we must adequately comprehend her duty! For the latter will be found essentially to modify the former. Supposing the absence from the Word of God of every plain intimation of her duty, still we should not be left without a witness,

if we could ascertain the design of her establishment, as we might safely infer the duty from the design.

What, then, is the design of God, in establishing his Church on earth? In the recovery of his lost domain, he determined to use the same instruments in man's restoration that had been employed by Satan in his fall, that thus his triumph might be more complete.

There is a retributive scheme in the economy of Providence, whose essential feature is, that each transgression shall carry with itself its appropriate punishment, and each reward bear some affinity of delight to the peculiar characteristics of the work which secured it.

In the history of redemption, then, we find the audacity and malice of Satan meeting their retribution in the overthrow of their efforts, and in the use of the very instrument which he had chosen for his work of ruin, in accomplishing the purpose of mercy, and making reparation to the race for the act that had ruined it.

If, then, human agency was to be used in the conversion of mankind, we must conclude that the most available and efficacious form of that agency would be selected by a God of wisdom as the vehicle of his salvation.

Social organization is here at once indicated; and the design of that organization is, to furnish a

medium through which the Christian principles of its individual hearts, may be most successfully developed, and made to operate upon a world in sin!

The duty of the Church, then, can only be fully accomplished, when every such principle of each heart is in full and lively exercise, for otherwise, the tardiness of one would influence another, and so the value of the medium to the person thus influenced would be correspondingly depreciated.

This view of the duty of the Church is corroborated by the inference drawn from the circumstances of her position! Existence always implies relation, and relation always originates obligation. Throughout all possible existence, this law holds undisputed sway. Situated, then, as she is, in the midst of the world, the relations which she necessarily sustains with it bind her with obligations inexorable and eternal. The great primary law of love spreads its wing of compassion even over the world in sin, and calls upon the Church, as the administrator of its beneficence, to promote the well-being of man in every possible manner; and as Christian principle is that which is ultimately to accomplish this, therefore, the great duty of the Church is, to spread that principle throughout the world.

If this view needs further confirmation, we may find it in the best history of the Church. We con

sider that the best history of any institution, which most amply illustrates the principles by which it is professedly controlled. In the case before us, those principles are too well known to need a lengthy rehearsal. When have they been most strikingly illustrated?

In the Apostolic age it is said of the Church, Acts ix. 31, "Then had the churches rest, throughout all Judea, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." Again, Acts viii. 4, "Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word;" and again, Acts iv. 34, 35, "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." We invite particular attention to a part of each of the above quotations. Acts ix. 31, "Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." Acts viii. 4, "Went everywhere, preaching the word;" and Acts iv. 34, " As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them —and distribution was made," etc. Reserving all remarks upon the facts till a future time, we add the testimony of Pliny, a heathen writer, who lived about 107 years after Christ. Speaking of Christians, he says—"They were wont to meet together on a stated day, before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as God, and bind themselves by an oath not to commit any wickedness, but that they would not be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery; that they would never falsify their word, or deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it."—Paley's Evidences, p. 46.

Another heathen writer, about A. D. 150, testifies thus: "It is incredible what expedition they use when any of their friends are known to be in trouble. In a word, they spare nothing upon such an occasion; for these miserable men have no doubt they shall be immortal and live forever; therefore they contemn death, and many surrender themselves to sufferings. Moreover, their first lawgiver has taught them that they are all brethren, when once they have turned and renounced the gods of the Greeks and worship this master of theirs, who was crucified, and engage to live according to his laws. They have also a sovereign contempt for all the things of this world, and look upon them as common."-Lucian.-Paley's Evidences, p. 50.

The Roman Clement, who was made Bishop of Rome A. D. 81, writes to the Christian Church of their former character and tells them—" Ye were all of you humble minded, not boasting of any-

thing, desiring rather to be subject than to govern, to give than to receive, being content with the portion God hath dispensed to you, and hearkening diligently to his word: ye were enlarged in your bowels, having his sufferings always before your eyes. Ye contended day and night for the whole brotherhood, that with compassion and a good conscience the number of his elect might be saved. Ye were sincere, and without offense towards each other. Ye bewailed every one his neighbor's sins, esteeming their defects your own."

Says Ruter, in Church History, p. 33, of the Christians of the second century :- "Relinquishing the delights and splendors of vanity, they voluntarily renounced their possessions for the relief of their indigent brethren; but these renunciations, unlike those of the heathen philosophers, were not sacrifices of sensuality upon the shrine of pride, they proceeded from the purest motives, and were performed with the sublimest views. . . . . They were bound by a solemn obligation to abstain from those crimes which disturb the private and public peace of society—from thefts, seditions, adultery, perjury, or fraud. To this freedom from the vices, they added a warm and active charity—charity not confined to the particular society to which they belonged, nor even to the whole Christian community, but extending to all, however different in religious opinions." Again, on p. 38, he says:

—"To these causes (which he had before enumerated) for the progress of religion, must be added the labors of several missionaries, who, warmed with pious zeal, journeyed into remote countries for the propagation of the truth, among whom was the learned Pantænus, who traveled as far as India."

Eusebius, in Ecclesiastical History, book 3, chap. 37, p. 123, speaking of the times of *Ignatius*, A. D. 100, says:—"For the most of the disciples at that time, animated with a more ardent love of the divine word, had first fulfilled the Saviour's precept by distributing their substance to the needy. Afterwards, leaving their country, they performed the office of evangelist to those who had not yet heard the faith: whilst, with a noble ambition to proclaim Christ, they also delivered to them the book of the Holy Gospels."

Now, no one will deny that the experience of the Church, from her first establishment to the end of the second century, was the best illustration of her principles that her history has ever furnished. The examples which we have selected are but a few of the number which might have been employed; but they are sufficient for our purpose.

They teach us three important facts: 1st. That a willing obedience to all God's requirements was a prominent characteristic of primitive Christians!

"Walking in the fear of God and in the comfort

of the Holy Ghost."—Luke. "Being content with the portion God hath dispensed to you, and hearkening diligently to his word," etc.—Clement.

"For the most of the disciples, at that time (time of Ignatius, A.D. 100), animated with a more ardent love of the divine word," etc.—Eusebius.

2d. A most unselfish love, for all attested the truth of their profession!

"As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according as he had need."

"They have also a sovereign contempt for the things of the world, and look upon them as common."

"It is incredible what expedition they use when any of their friends are in trouble. In a word, they spare nothing upon such an occasion," etc.—Lucian. "Ye contended day and night for the whole brotherhood, that with compassion and a good conscience the number of his elect might be saved. Ye were sincere and without offense towards each other, ye bewailed every one his neighbor's sins, esteeming their defects your own."—Clement.

"They voluntarily renounced their possessions for the relief of their indigent brethren, but their renunciations, unlike those of the heathen philosophers, were not sacrifices of sensuality upon the shrine of pride, but they proceeded from the

purest motives, and were performed with the sublimest views. . . . To this freedom from the vices, they added a warm and active charity, a charity not confined to the particular society to which they belonged, nor even to the whole Christian community, but extending to all, however different in religious opinions."—Ruter.

"Had first fulfilled the Saviour's precept by distributing their substance to the needy." Eusebius.

3d. An earnest aggressive missionary spirit

"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."—Bible.

... "Several missionaries, warmed with pious zeal, journeyed into remote countries for the propagation of the truth."—Ruter.

"Afterwards leaving their country, they performed the office of evangelist to those who had not yet heard the faith: whilst, with a noble ambition to proclaim Christ, they also delivered to them the books of the Holy Gospels."—Eusebius.

We do not wish to be understood as deducing the above three facts from any single quotation, nor any one of them from an isolated passage, but that the combined testimony of the witnesses examined prove irrefragably the propositions stated. And if we place these quotations in contrast with the lax morality of the times—the almost total destitution of religious restraint upon the selfishness and passions of the human heart—the absence of all proper views of duty and accountability—and the hatred and persecutions to which they as Christians were continually exposed—we must admit that nothing short of the principles involved in the propositions can account for the conduct alluded to in the language quoted. Now put the case to any candid mind. Here is a period of 200 years, in which it is acknowledged by all that the Church was most faithful to her principles; and in that period the above three things were constantly and indubitably exemplified-in direct opposition to the teachings of Judaism and philosophy—the belief and practice of the people, the persecutions of a powerful empire, and the natural feelings and desires of the heart; and to what conclusion could he come, but that stern duty demanded the sacrifice, and if so, that the same is the duty of the church in all ages? And looking through this duty to its final purpose, who can fail to perceive the conversion of the world as its ultimate achievement? Especially when we add the weight of the fact, that the adaptation of the fundamental principles of any system to any particular end, is a presumption that that is the end contemplated in the creation of the system. How wisely the principles of the Gospel are adapted to universal diffusion, need not be here enlarged upon.

The declarations of our Lord settle the question beyond all controversy!

He has commanded his ministers, "to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature;" "to go and disciple all nations, baptizing them," etc. The Gospel is said to be "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." "The heathen" are promised "for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession." "The earth" is to be "full of the knowledge of the Lord," and "all are to know him even from the least unto the greatest." See Isa. xi. 1–9, and Micah iv. 1–4.

The Church holds within her power the glorious Gospel by which all this is to be effected. Surely, then, it were redundancy now to affirm that it is her duty to extend it through the earth. Interpreting this duty by the design of her establishment as already declared, namely, to furnish a medium through which the Christian principle of her individual hearts may be most successfully developed, and made to operate upon a world in sin, we have, at a single glance, the end to be gained, and the way to secure it!

Individual Responsibility! Christian Principle! and Aggressive Action!

are the epitomes of the sole requisites!

A work like this, of course, involves vast and

unheard of difficulties. Not only is the native depravity of the human heart to be met and overcome everywhere, but all the developments of that depravity, in the form of the mammoth systems of idolatry and superstition which spread their baneful influence through the earth, and which are wedded to the heart by all the associations of early years, and all the attachments of religious veneration and hope, and which are fortified by the most tenacious prejudices, and guarded with watchful care, all these are to be driven from their citadels, and exterminated from the earth. The difficulties arising from the various languages, customs, modes of thought, national antagonisms, and social corruptions of the race, are all to be provided for. Under these circumstances, mere human reason would pronounce the declared duty of the Church a stupendous fallacy, her plans of conquest, chimerical schemes, and all her efforts the height of madness. And well it might: for, in the whole history of the race, is no record of the universal triumph of any single system of religion, however much it might have enlisted the attachment of men by ministering to their vices, or by however favorable exigencies promoted. But it is the consolation of the Church, that the remedy which she presents for human corruption is not a device of man's own depravity; and that the claims which she urges are not the debasing ones that appeal most strongly to his sensual passions, but are those which arise from the relations in which he is placed, and are sustained by the *felt* wants of the human heart.

Full well does she know, also, that though man's powers may be taxed to the utmost in the mighty work, yet it is God who giveth the increase. And though skies may lower, and forbidding circumstances in dark array gather their gloomy forms around her, she may still work on, confiding in Him who maketh the cloud his chariot and the stormy winds his messengers fulfilling his word,—to bring out of all the sovereign purposes of his grace.



## CHAPTER II.

THE RESOURCES OF THE CHURCH.

Man is a social being, and finds it necessary to carry on all great enterprises through social combinations and by organized effort.

The Church of Christ is a vast organization, with its own peculiar laws and designs, but so adapted as to take hold of the social sympathies and operate upon the masses, through all the interests of the public weal, the family relations, and the individual heart. Thus it is invested with a power at once comprehensive and far-reaching. We are too much accustomed to regard the Church as a grand speciality, not only in its objects, but its influence. When we say that it is her sphere to promote the eternal interests of men, we utter a great truth, but one which, in the common acceptation, gives a too limited and one-sided view of the case. It is true that that is her duty, as it should be her glory; but we should recollect that this object is soonest and most successfully achieved by leaving the mystic regions of the future, and sitting beside the cottage hearth-stone, and walking through all the realities of life, and with a heavenly evangelism sanctifying all relations and all events to its own great end. It is thus that she is designed by Deity, in a kind of miniature omnipresence, to appeal to man always, offering to him, within her sacred enclosure, a field for his ambition worthy of his manhood, a sphere for his sympathies elevating and God-like, a refuge of endearment and might in despondency and danger, and a perennial fountain of life to his thirsting soul. Concentration of effort and influence embodies the Christian spirit, and prepares it to grapple successfully with the mighty social evils of the world, and opens an avenue of access to the great heart of the people. No one can fail to perceive that such an organization possesses elements of power which, if properly developed, are of incalculable strength. The very perversion of them in the hierarchies of Rome and Greece prove what their right use might become, in the hands of pure and wise leaders who would bend every purpose to the advancement of the cause.

In speaking thus of the Church as a corporate society, we do not mean to intimate that she possesses any particular form by "divine right," but that whatever her form, if faithful to her principles the same elements exist, and if vitality is developed by exercise, the same influence goes out upon the world. But we have already anticipated a distinct

resource of vast importance in this connection, viz., The unfailing energy of Truth!

Truth is eternal, always operative, and always efficient to convict of its own existence. To disbelieve all truth were impossible, for it is the basis of all consciousness and knowledge. Hence the system which contains the greatest amount of truth, is best prepared to appeal to man's credence or belief. And in the exact ratio of its truth, is its prospect of ultimate success. If, then, it be all truth, final triumph is its destiny from the evolution of its own diffusive and immortal essence.

We suggest that herein is the great principle upon which is founded the prophetic annals of a world redeemed!

As the first-born child of Deity, Truth inherits her own eternal paternity, and though she has been left prostrate and bleeding upon many a battle-field, yet has she arisen from each, more terrible from her defeat, and more hopeful of final triumph. Thus shall it ever be. The majesty of all-conquering might belongs only to Truth! The spasmodic or raving efforts of Error may for a time crown her with success, but heaven's own law of essential superiority will soon reverse the scene. Truth has won her trophies from every age, and the deeper the darkness that has enshrouded the conflict, the brighter has gleamed the star which she has hung up on high, as the beacon of hope for

those yet in the gloom of ignorance and error. Being indestructible, the essential element of strength in God's Church is eternal, because not only true but truth!

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life."

Another resource, and the chief dependence of the Church, is alliance with Deity! We are accustomed to estimate the value of human alliances by the relative position and standing of the proposed party, and the advantages that are likely to accrue to ourselves from the compact.

Adopting the same standard in our present subject, we scarcely know where to begin to give an appreciative view of this stupendous truth. But, waiving all comparative illustrations, let us analyze the relation, and thus judge in detail of what our minds are too feeble to grasp in the aggregate. An interest in the gracious provisions of the gospel is one of the benefits of this alliance.

The gracious provisions of the gospel! How sweetly does the sentence sound in the Christian ear! It is at once suggestive of all that is lovely, and desirable, and recommendatory in the religion of Christ. If there is aught in this religion to elevate the race, and bring back the forfeited blessings of man's state of innocence, it is included here. If there is a light streaming out across the dark moral desolations of a world in sin, presaging the dawn of a bright and glorious day, its

central ray emerges from this divine benefac-

If there is a power to quicken the dead sensibilities, and call out to new life the dormant energies of the child of earth, and point his aspirations to a purer clime, that power radiates from the cross of Christ.

If there is a mighty comfort, which can traverse the waste places of earth, steal into the house of affliction, and soothe the dying spirit; sit beside the lone mourner in her bereavement, and whisper of a sympathizing Saviour, and inspire sweet musings of a reunion in the sky; or strike from the harp-strings of God's providence some touching notes, that shall soften and subdue the chafed and maddened spirit of proud and disappointed man; in short, if there is a response in the religion of the Saviour to every aching desire, and every kindling hope, and every longing sympathy, and every helpless want of man, all, all is found in the gracious provisions of his gospel.

More, here is pardon, and healing, and peace, and life, and hope, and joy, and heaven! What wonder, then, that an institution possessing all the advantages of social organization, mutual sympathy, union of effort, and with a grandeur of design and invincibility of purpose worthy the conception of God, armed with weapons forged by Deity from truth's own mine, backed by treaty stipulations

with the Infinite, and laden with the weighty persuasions of gospel provisions—what wonder, we say, that such an institution should unfold the banner of universal conquest, and summon the world to surrender to its claims!

Two of these provisions demand a more distinct and specific recognition.

We refer to the power of believing prayer, and the agency of the Holy Spirit.

The power of prayer, as the "charter of grace," can only be measured by the specifications of the original draft. If those specifications include the whole realm of possibilities, both physical and spiritual, Mark ix. 23, then any one possibility may be claimed by virtue of the first conveyance of the whole, as a kind of legacy to the Church.\* And the only limits which ever have been fixed by the testator, are those which the volitions of a Christian faith define. Hence, any view of Christianity that does not include prayer as one of its mightiest forces, leaves out its divinest philosophy. It would seem, from the phraseology of some of the promises, as if it were left entirely to man's discretion in asking to ordain what he shall receive; but \* when we compare the fullness of some with the restrictions of others, we find a beautiful system of privilege and law in harmony; the privilege so

<sup>\*</sup> John xiv. 12-14, xv. 7, xvi. 23, 24; Matt. xvii, 20.

rich as to sometimes appear to reach beyond all law, and yet the law so firm as to give immutability and definite limits to the privilege. The single word *faith* combines both the privilege and its limitation.

But true faith has its conditions, which are inseparable from its existence and exercise, and which may be expressed, in brief, as importunity of desire according to the will of God.

Whatever the true Christian earnestly desires, and persistently asks for, that God can consistently give, he may expect to receive.

Human reason may not be able always to decide what is consistent for Him to give, though, even in this, the general principles of his administration have placed the most important gift (the Holy Spirit) beyond all contingency; for that is always ready to be imparted to every one.

But when the Spirit suggests the prayer, and "makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered," however protracted the struggle, the result is sure. In the accomplishment of his purposes, God always employs fixed and appropriate agencies; some material, necessitated, and irresponsible; others rational, free, and responsible. The first, of course, fill their sphere, "and accomplish that whereunto He has sent them." Not so with the latter. The external and internal worlds bristle with antagonisms at every point.

How, then, shall individual man fulfill the purposes of God? All around is opposed to them. Himself is opposed to them. Shall he change himself? Where will he begin? He has no basis, no starting-point, no power. His intellect, sensibilities, and will are all opposed. Can he fight himself? Himself is all depraved, and he cannot go out of himself to take hold of himself and change himself. Can a man lift himself from the earth with nothing to hang upon? Unless, then, he can be himself and not himself at the same time, no such conflict is possible. Hence the necessity of a foreign agency to enable him to commence and prosecute the war against himself. That agency is supplied in the Holy Spirit. And until this influence is felt, no man is, in the gospel sense, free "to choose life or death;" for the simple reason, that he is in death; and as death cannot generate life, neither can be of himself choose life while in death.

But the Spirit "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world." Now, all are placed where they may choose life, and then live on, independent of any further assistance of the Spirit, or choose it, and consummate their salvation with his assistance. The first contradicts all experience, and the second supposes that the requisite assistance is rendered in all its measures independent of man's choice, or subservient to it. To suppose

it to be independent, involves the absurdity that by one volition he has forever excluded the possibility of any opposing volitions. For *sufficient* assistance, independent of man's choice, must include the idea of the *certainty* of the result for which it was rendered.

To suppose this aid to be subservient to his choice, implies the declaration of that choice, which is prayer!

Prayer, then, is a necessary power in human salvation. It must be offered with positive faith in its efficacy, or with doubt, or with a total disbelief of its benefits. But it is impossible sincerely to pray for what we believe we cannot have; and uncertainty tends to paralyze the energies, and make its possessor wretched—so that prayer, the very means by which he is to be saved, would make him miserable. We are thus shut up to faith, as the necessary mental condition of prayer. But there is also a theological reason why it should be made that condition. We glorify God by our faith, before it is possible to do so by our works, because faith precedes works in the order of existence.

But faith, too, has its conditions. It must harmonize with the will of God. Faith contemplates receiving something as the "free gift" of another. That which is another's, to be disposed of as a "free gift," must be in his own power. Faith, then, can only claim so far as the design of disposal has been

revealed! The design can only be revealed by the will of the possessor. Hence there is a philosophical necessity that faith should be subordinate to and harmonize with the will of God. That will may be revealed in general principles, leaving faith at liberty to make the individual applications, or by special suggestions, the last of which involves the agency of the Holy Spirit. But our power of belief needs the constant assistance of the Spirit, as well as our will; hence, that agency is supposed in all true faith, whether excited by a sense of want, in view of the special suggestions of the Spirit, or of the general principles referred to! Another condition is connected with true faith. That which we feebly desire to possess, we estimate at a small value when possessed! On the contrary, that which we earnestly desire, and strive long to obtain, we value highly. Hence, earnest and persistent desire is made a condition of true faith, that we may appreciate its blessings when received.

The gospel is designed to save men—all who will accept it. The agency of the Holy Ghost, operating through the faith of the Church, is the means by which it saves. The faith of the Church, then, may be commensurate with the necessity for this agent, up to the limits of personal freedom. Or, in other words, The faith of the Church may possess an unlimited power of conviction! and as the self-

determining will is not insensible to the power of the motives which the gospel presents, and that appeal peculiarly to such states of mind, the probability, nay, the certainty is, that to such a power of conviction may be added, in the great majority of instances, an instrumental power of conversion! Thus we see that the power of prayer is the key that unlocks the world's hope.

The historical aspects of the case will be left for a future page.

The agency of the Holy Spirit is the grand foundation of all the provisions of the gospel. It is the "dispensational gift of the gospel," and, as such, its central point of attraction.

Its outpouring in the "last days" has held the wrapt spirit of prophecy in visions of glory and delight, till the purest and noblest strains of the seer's lyre have been attuned to its honor, and the pencil of inspiration has drawn its brightest conceptions, to herald its approach.

Whatever of superiority of privilege we have over the Jew, with his types and shadows and ritual observances, we owe to the fact, that we enjoy the substance, for which Moses hoped when he prayed, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children;" and what Zerubbabel contemplated, when he exclaimed, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."—The kingdom which Daniel be-

held-" And in the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever," ii. 44. -The reality figured by the valley of the vision of Ezekiel, xxxvii. 1-10: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones; behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

See! in what triumphant strains the pen of prophecy has recorded its effusions:

"He shall come down like rain upon the mown

grass; as showers that water the earth."

"I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I would pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon their offspring; and they shall spring up as among the grass; as willows by the water courses."

"Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the

fruitful field be counted for a forest."

"Neither will I hide my face from them any more; for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God."

"I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn."

"And it shall come to pass, afterwards, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaidens in those days, will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens

and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered."—Joel ii. 28–32.

The final results of the gospel involve the same truth. "The Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places. Break forth into joy; sing together, ye waste places. Where are those that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows? The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

- "I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possessions."
- "The kingdoms of the earth are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."
- "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."
- "Thy watchman shall lift up the voice, with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."
- "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."—Isa. ii.

4. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountains: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries also of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

"In his days shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

The Saviour has taken up and prolonged the cheering declaration of the prophetic pen in his own precious promises.

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glori fied.)"

John iv. 10-14. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee. Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Luke xxiv. 49. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

John xvi. 7, 13. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

"Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come."

John xiv. 16, 17, 26. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The day of Pentecost was the dawn of the long anticipated day of universal redemption. And when the disciples "were all, with one accord, in one place, suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance"—then they felt the baptismal power of the last and most glorious dispensation of mercy to fallen man.

The influences of the Holy Spirit have been divided by theologians into two classes. 1st. The extraordinary gifts of the Spirit. 1 Cor. xii. 8-11. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by

the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

Acts ii. 4. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."

Acts xix. 6. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied."

John xiv. 12. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

Luke xii. 11, 12. "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

2d. The ordinary operations or graces of the Spirit!

Gal. v. 23. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness temperance."

His offices may be illustrated in a few brief propositions.

1st. He illuminates the understanding. Eph. i. 17, 18. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

John xvi. 8, 13. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

"Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come."

Luke xii. 12. "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

2d. He sanctifies the will. 1 Cor. vi. 11. "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

3d. He excites pious emotions and purposes. 2 Cor. 3, 5. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God."

Phil. ii. 13. "For it is God which worketh in

you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Romans viii. 13. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Heb. xiii. 20, 21. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever."

4th. He comforts under difficulties. John xiv. 16, 17, 26. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

Rom. xv. 13. "Now, the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

John xv. 26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." John xvi. 6, 7. "But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell

you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

5th. He intercedes for us in prayer! Rom. viii. 26. "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

6th. He strengthens us. Eph. iii. 16. "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;"

"And ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you."

"For we have not received the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

7th. He seals us as God's children, and witnesses to our adoption. 2 Cor. i. 22. "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Eph. i. 13. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

1 John iii. 24. "And he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."

1 John iv. 13. "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."

Eph. iv. 30. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

This is a brief Scripture view of this provision of the gospel. From this it appears that an indwelling Deity is the inheritance of the Church. "For he (the Comforter) dwelleth with you and shall be in you." John xiv. 17.

And as he is infinite in his perfections, actuating and assisting the Christian, it follows that the works of Deity he may do, within the prescribed limits of the charter of grace. "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Heb. xiv. 12.

This seems to warrant a kind of miracle-working power, as a consequence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "He that believeth in me," is the statement; not "the Apostles who believe in me, or the first Christians who believe in me;" but "he that believeth," etc. Making the promise as general as the power of believing! Does the term "believeth" here signify the act of saving faith, or a definite act of special miracle-working faith? I will not attempt at present to decide this question, but pass to define the phrase miracle-working faith. A miracle, in the philosophic sense, is "an effect

which does not follow from any of the regular laws of nature, or which is inconsistent with some known law of it, or contrary to the settled constitution and course of things."—Watson's Theological Institutes, vol. i. p. 73.

A miracle-working faith, then, is the faith by whose instigation the Holy Spirit works a miracle, or produces "an effect which does not follow from any of the regular laws of nature," etc. It is the common belief of the Church that the power to work miracles has passed away, and that it is nothing less than fanaticism for any one now to claim even the possibility of it, much more the actual possession of the power.

It seems, however, to be a point well established by Church History, that it (the power of working miracles) was continued measurably until the third or fourth century.

Now, if we can show upon the best of evidence that, as real miracles have been wrought at different periods in the history of the Church, down to a very recent date, as those of the first ages, to what conclusion must we arrive but that it was God's design to continue that power indefinitely, and that the backwardness of the Church alone has kept her from claiming it; or that, without any obvious design, occasional instances have occurred? The analogy of grace and providence forbids the latter view. If it be claimed that there

was a manifest and sufficient reason in these particular instances, it could easily be shown that the same, or equally strong reasons always exist; therefore, if, at any one time, this power was vouchsafed for any given reason, the regularity of the Divine administration would lead us to expect its repetition upon every occurrence of the same, or an equally weighty consideration.

To utterly deny the facts alluded to, or their character as miraculous interpositions, is to invalidate all testimony, and overthrow the foundation upon which those rest, to which we refer, in the first centuries.

Indeed, with the Bible before us, we see nothing unreasonable in the admission that they are real miracles; or in the expectation to see them multiplied whenever the faith of the Church is sufficiently strong to claim them. The very terms of the authorization of the prayer of faith seems to warrant the expectation. "What things soever ye desire, when ve pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Mark xi. 24. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Mark ix. 23. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven." Matt. xviii. 19. "If ye have faith, and doubt not, . . . . and shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the

sea; it shall be done." Matt. xxi. 21. "Is any sick among you? let him him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." James v. 14, 15; Matt. xxi. 22; John xv. 7, 16, 24; James i. 5; John iii. 22; v. 14-16. If God meant while making these promises that their application should be held strictly within the domain of ordinary nature, why did He not say so, and not lead Christians to expect from the terms of the promise, viewed in the light of the apostolic experience, what he knows they could never have? Nay, why did He authorize us to pray at all with the expectation of receiving answers according to our faith? In our view, the very idea of prayer, if we must interpret it by the circumscribed limits of nature, is a stupendous inconsistency, yea, a Heaven-authorized fraud upon our credulity!

The truth is, the very first idea of prayer towers infinitely above nature, and scorns to stoop so low as to trammel itself with the fetters of mere natural law. But it may be said that the doctrine of prayer is totally distinct from the power of working miracles, and that the latter was a special gift designed to meet a particular emergency, while the former is for all time, and hence our inference from it is unfair

Let us see. The disciples had been taught to expect the gift of the Spirit, and the power of working miracles after the Saviour's ascension, and accordingly we find them all continuing "with one accord in prayer and supplication," Acts i. 14. For what? Evidently for the baptism that Christ had promised-" But ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence, Acts i. 5. and the power which was to follow." Acts i. 8. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place," Acts ii. 1, mark the phraseologyprecisely the same as when before narrating the fact of their prayer and supplication. Why were they thus congregated? Certainly to continue their prayer and supplication!

What was the result? "And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under Heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak

in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marvelled, saying one to another; behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God." Acts ii. 2-11. The whole tenor of the narration forbids the supposition that any were present besides the chosen disciples. But they, very naturally being astonished at the miracle, hastened away to spread the news, and when it "was noised abroad, the multitude came together!"

The evidence upon the face of this testimony is, that it was in answer to prayer that the Holy Ghost descended, and the power was given. This was the opening miracle of the completed gospel! We should expect it would contain the essential principles of the whole economy. It did, and one of those principles was, that all good gifts, whether special or ordinary, are received and held by the tenure of faith in prayer!

The history of the subsequent miracles of the Apostles confirms this position. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were

assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness." Acts iv. 31. "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal. iii. 5; Acts, iii. 2-6 And this is but a continuation of the standing order of God's miraculous intervention since the days of Adam. "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." Rom. iv. 19, 20. See also the 11th of Hebrews. And besides it was what our Lord himself had practically declared. "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Matt. xiii. 58. "And he said to the woman, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." Luke vii. 50. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" John xi. 40; Matt. xxi. 21; Mark ix. 23-4; xi. 23; Luke viii. 48; xvii. 17-19.

In view of this, there can be no question that faith in prayer secures all blessings of the Spirit, whether miraculous or otherwise. I grant, indeed, that the prayer must be the inspiration of the Spirit—as are all pious desires—and that, consequently, if the Spirit never impels to prayers for

miraculous works, they cannot be wrought: But some promises of the Bible are utterly meaningless, or the Spirit does incite to such prayers, and such results may be realized! To the denial of this proposition, I oppose simple facts!

I do not advocate this truth to encourage fanaticism, but to show the Church that she possesses a magazine of convicting energy, which, if brought forth and displayed, would astonish the world.

Upon the hypothesis of those who contend that this power was voluntarily withdrawn from the Church by her Lord—I ask when was it withdrawn? and when that is answered, why was it recalled? But the answer is at hand—"Because it was no longer necessary." But why was it no longer necessary? "Because Christianity was established, and the purpose for which it was given was accomplished!" Then I answer, it existed for three hundred years after the necessity for it had ceased; for Christianity was established firmly, as the pillars of Heaven, before the last Apostle went to his reward. And if it existed three hundred years, then, why not eighteen hundred?

I contend that all the historical authorization that Christianity needed—all that could add one particle to its weight of evidence—was experienced in the days of the Apostles. Why, then, was it

<sup>\*</sup> According to Mosheim, miracles had not entirely ceased in the fourth century!

continued? Was it for the sake of impression? The world never needed impression as it does to-day!

Where, then, is the unreasonableness of the view which is here presented. But let us guard it from misapprehension. The Church may possess a miracle-working power, so far as is necessary to produce the impression of its divinity; but it is held strictly upon the conditions of a holy life, and faith in prayer! This seems to be the doctrine of the Bible, and I have sought in vain for a wellgrounded objection to it. There can be no danger in this view, so long as the qualifying clause is kept before the mind, viz.: That the incitements of the Spirit are necessary to such prayer and faith. I do not believe that a state of "ordinary piety" can claim it, for this is a most palpable misnomer. "Ordinary piety" is, in fact, gross impiety! and to such God will never vouchsafe the higher blessings with which he "honors those who honor him," by deep communings and unfaltering trust.

The biographer of Bishop Roberts, referring to an unconverted young lady—Miss McA.—who was expected to die, and who had sent a note desiring the prayers of the congregation (p. 277), says: "The Bishop read the contents from the stand, withholding the name and family connections of the young lady, and then made a few remarks to move the sympathies of the congregation, and concluded by calling upon them to unite in earnest

prayer to God for her salvation, and for the recovery of her health.

"His address to the Throne of Grace on this occasion, which was the opening prayer of the service, was most fervent, importunate and powerful, and was made, apparently, with all the confidence and strong faith of one who felt assured that his requests would be heard and answered. And so it was, for in that very hour she began to recover, and in a few days was fully restored to health."

See, also, Life of Garrettson, p. 97:-" A remarkable circumstance happened respecting a young lady who was brought up in the Quaker persuasion. It pleased the Lord to awaken her when very young. She experienced the pardoning love of God, and continued to enjoy it for some time. By degrees, however, she got off her watch, having none to strengthen, but many to draw her away. She at length fell from God, and became as wild and trifling as ever. Soon after this, she was entirely deprived of her speech; the enemy of her soul persuaded her to believe that it was a sin for her to do any kind of work, or even to dress herself; and if they gave her a book to read, she thought it sinful to turn over a leaf, and would read no more unless some one would perform this office for her. It was impressed on her mind, that that there was a people in a particular place who served the Lord, and, if she could get among them,

they would be a means of restoring her to her speech. She had never heard of a Methodist; and the place which was revealed to her was nearly twenty miles from her residence, where there was a young, loving society. Though she knew nothing of the way, she set off to find that place and people. Her family, missing her, pursued and brought her back. Not long after, she made a more successful attempt, and found the society. The Lord revealed her case to them. There was a preacher present, Mr. Daniel Ruff, who consented to call a meeting, and they cried to the Lord in her behalf that day and the next. She then went into a private room, kneeled down to prayer, and continued there till the Lord blessed her soul. At the same time her tongue was loosened, and she could speak forth the praises of Israel's God. She had been dumb about two years." The following is from the Life of Henry Moore :- "Newry, at that time, belonged to the Charlemount circuit, at which place I arrived on the Saturday evening; soon after, I came to the circuit, and was informed by our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy, that I must visit a gentlewoman as soon as I could make it convenient, who was supposed to be dying. They informed me further, that she had been ill a considerable time, of a dropsical complaint, and had often expressed a wish to converse with our people, and especially to be visited by our preachers;

but her husband had refused his consent, dreading the reproach that he thought would follow. He was a Socinian, and a man of some eminence in the town and in his congregation; but the hopeless case of a wife that he loved had at length moved him to comply with her wishes. 'She expects you, sir,' said Mr. Kennedy; 'and it will not do to wait till to-morrow.' I accordingly went, and was introduced to a most interesting person, a young gentlewoman, whose every look seemed to say, 'Who will show me any good?' Her swelled appearance, with the emaciation of her still very beautiful countenance, proclaimed her case to be desperate; and two most lovely children added to the afflictive scene. Her husband, a fine young man, hung over her with every appearance of strong affection; but I could perceive that there was a jealousy concerning me that was not comfortable. I spoke to the lady as to a dying person, and in a way that I supposed he would perhaps account enthusiastic. But I was encouraged to hope for the sufferer, as I found she was, indeed, 'poor in spirit.' We engaged in prayer, but I think I never felt myself so embarrassed. I attempted to pray for her as for a dying person, but could hardly utter a sentence without hesitation; my prayer had no wings; and the thought, that the husband was watching over me, so greatly added to my embarrassment, that I thought I must

give over. At length, however, the thought of her recovery came with strange force into my mind, and immediately words poured upon me faster than I could utter them. I felt that it was, indeed, 'the prayer of faith,' which, St. James says, 'shall save the sick.' I seemed to claim, on her behalf, a return to life at the Lord's hands. I at length concluded, but was almost immediately tempted to think that I had given way to a delusion that would render me ridiculous, and do harm to unprepared minds. I took my leave, the afflicted lady requesting that I would soon call again; and the husband, with an astonished countenance, was hardly able to utter even the common civilities usual at parting.

"On returning to my residence, I had some very painful thoughts; fearing that the tender mind of the sufferer might be wounded by the remarks that would probably be made in such a family upon my visionary conduct. The hope of her recovery seemed, however, to abide with me; but I thought I would keep it to myself, and pray for her in the family as for a dying person. But it was in vain: the same strong influences set my prudence at defiance, and I was constrained to ask life for her as at her own habitation, to the great amazement of my pious host and his family. The same influence prevailed in all the ministrations of the following day, particularly in the class, which was

always met by the preacher in the afternoon of the Lord's day. In the evening, after the services were over, I again visited my patient, and again amazed all who were assembled, by the strange confidence and importunity of my faith. . . . . I returned, in my course, at the end of six weeks, and found my very amiable sufferer in a state rather beyond convalescence, and a member of the society? The husband had dismissed all opposition; he received me with joy, and expressed his thankfulness in strong terms. He would have me to dine with him, and I made one of a very happy family. . . . In my course of labor I have had several instances of the same kind of gracious interpositions, but none I think so remarkable." Life of Moore, pp. 79-82.—The following is from the Life of Carvosso.—"I am just returned from a visit to the friends at Sparnock. In meeting the class I had a precious time; my soul was like a watered garden. The next morning a friend asked me to visit a woman who was sick, and offered to accompany me. When we arrived at the house, we were informed that she was very ill. I went up stairs, and found her, to all human appearance, on the borders of eternity. Finding that she had been three years a member of the society, and knew nothing of salvation by the remission of her sins, I felt no little concern for the salvation of her soul. I asked her, for what end Jesus Christ

came into the world? She replied, 'To save sinners.' I then told her that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and that he would never be more willing to save her than he was at that moment. I explained to her the plan of salvation, and showed her it was 'to him that worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, that his faith is counted for righteousness.' 'And now,' said I, 'it is a duty which God requires of you to believe in Jesus Christ, and in the truth of his promises.' While I was thus speaking to her, she was seized in a strange manner; and it appeared to me and those present that she was dying. But in a moment or two she lifted up her hands and eyes to heaven, and cried out, 'Glory be to God, I am healed-I am healed!' And for some considerable time she kept on repeating, 'The Lord has healed me, body and soul.' . . . . This was the beginning of a glorious work in that neighborhood, for which, I believe, many will bless God in eternity."-Memoir of Carvosso, pp. 73, 75.

Many will, doubtless, pass by such facts, with the simple remark, "They are quite marvelous," and, without another thought, suffer them to sink into forgetfulness. But pause, dear reader! The inexplicable is not always unprofitable, and the infrequent is not always necessarily so! There is a philosophy in these facts, standing out, as they do, wrapped in their supposed problematical character, as incarnations of an unlooked-for mystery! Remember, I am not writing for the eye of the professedly skeptical, but for those who are supposed to give a hearty credence to the truths of Scripture.

Surely, then, I may demand the benefit of whatever principles I find there, tending to unfold the matter. The principle is avowed in connection with the facts related. It was by the prayer of faith! Now, if we admit the truth of these narratives, we wish to know why they were, and without presumptuously attempting to discern the secret reasons of the Almighty, we may urge the inquiry, why they were? They were the results of faith in prayer. Those prayers were voluntary, or involuntary, and the blessing desired was conditional or unconditional. The very face of the stories proves the prayers to have been voluntary, and the blessing conditional. But still, God must have suggested them. Then there was some great reason demanding it. We can find naught in the peculiar circumstances of these cases that would not be found in a thousand similar ones. The conclusion, then, is, so far as I can see, that He does suggest such things in numerous instances, and the faith of the agent fails, or that in these cases, all is to be accounted for upon the bare fact of his sovereignty. But the true idea of sovereignty

involves a reference to principles in the Divine mind; hence it will not do to say that they were mere exercises of the Divine power, for some particular reason unknown to us! for all particular reasons must resolve themselves into some general reason. What, then, is the general reason why He thus interferes in particular instances? The answer is, the necessities of his cause! Then, in this, as well as all other cases of his intervention, when He employs human instrumentality, He respects their free agency, and this leads us directly to what I before stated—that a want of faith is the reason why such things are not more frequently witnessed.

When king Asa was diseased in his feet and "sought not to the Lord, but to the physicians," 2 Chron. xvi. 12, he died; when, had he "turned his face to the wall" and wept sore and prayed unto the Lord, as Hezekiah did, he might, doubtless, have lived longer.

The conclusion from the foregoing is, that God designed the Church to possess the "healing power" in all ages; with the qualifications above stated, of Divine suggestion stimulating faith, and Divine power working by it! Mark the ground of this conviction. It is included in the express terms of the promises to answer prayer.

It is confirmed by the light of apostolical experience and example. It is substantiated by

instances in the history of the Church; for which there is evidently no other reason than the interests of his cause, which is in itself too wide a reason to admit of only a few illustrations. If the inference from these facts be objected to, upon the ground of its involving miraculous powers, I reply: "Every statement should be interpreted in the light of the science to which it belongs." You surely would not interpret a fact in ethics by the rules of geometry, nor understand an algebraic problem to be solved by the statutes of civil law! This belongs to the science of miracles, and viewed in relation to its apppropriate subject, prayer, there can be no objection to it.

But we should expect, from the design of the gospel and the example of the Saviour, that such instances would be comparatively rare. Those whom He healed bore a small proportion to those whom He instructed, and so of the Apostles! His gospel was not primarily designed as a panacea for "every ill that flesh is heir to," but as a spiritual specific. Its chief strength, then, will be developed in spiritual things! But shall the inferior and incidental design, that of benefiting man physically, be honored by miracles, and the chief design be wrought out by ordinary means? No! No! The gospel is itself a miracle, and it makes miraculous provision for its own extension everywhere.

This leads us to the gist of the whole matter as illustrated in the instances below.

Lorenzo Dow relates of Mr. Mitchell, "When he began to exhort, a trembling commenced among the unconverted; first one, then another fell from their seats and began to cry for mercy. The influence spread till the cry became general; and for eleven hours there was no cessation of the loud cries and supplications of that smitten assembly. The wail of agony and the almost despairing cry for mercy were not unfrequently changed into the shout of victory and the song of triumph on that memorable occasion. The most abandoned, profligate, and wicked men, the caviling, skeptical deist, the bold, blaspheming atheist, and the brawling universalist, were alike humbled to the foot of the cross, and by the power of Divine grace were at length renewed and clothed in their right mind." Life and Times of Hedding, pp. 62, 63. Of a camp-meeting held in Hebron, Conn., in 1809, it is said, "From the very commencement there were signal indications of the Divine presence and power. Often, during the exercises, individuals would fall prostrate to the ground. As the meeting progressed, the interest continued to increase. On the fourth or fifth day, during the evening sermon, the power of the Holy Ghost fell on the congregation with overwhelming force. The people began to fall on every side. Many, who had come

to the meeting out of mere idle curiosity, were stricken down to the ground and cried aloud for mercy. Many, of other Christian denominations, who were greatly prejudiced against the Methodists, and especially against such exercises, fell powerless to the earth, and afterwards acknowledged the mighty hand of God. Quite a number of Methodists also, who had never witnessed such scenes, and were strongly opposed to them, fell along with the others. It was an awful hour of the manifestation of God's power and grace. Within the space of a few minutes, it was ascertained that not less than five hundred lay prostrate by the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . . The people were all amazed and confounded: the scoffer was silenced; the blasphemer turned pale and trembled; the infidel stood aghast. The universal voice of all was: 'Truly this is the mighty power of God, let us adore and tremble before him." "-Life and Times of Hedding, pp. 185, 186.

I have taken these illustrations at random from a multitude which the annals of early Methodism present, not because of any special adaptation to my purpose, but because the most readily accessible. One can scarcely find a volume of memoirs of an early preacher that does not teem with such accounts. In the proper place, the inquiry will be made: Why is it not so now? True, some of them may be considered as extreme cases; but such, so

far as the principles involved are concerned, are sometimes the best illustrations.

The point for which I contend is not the physical manifestations related, but the supernatural influence which produced them! I regard the possession of this influence as the reason of the success of the gospel in all past ages, and its only hope in ages yet to come. And in ordinary circumstances the success of any Church may be prospectively measured by the amount of this supernatural influence, or rather its essential conditions, in the possession of the Church at the time being.

Further, these effusions of this influence, which are now termed extraordinary and special, were designed by God to be the standing order of divine blessing in the Church in all ages, but to be witnessed with increasing power, in obedience to the law of gospel progression. Progress is the order of God's work everywhere, why not also in the displays of the Holy Spirit? especially as it works by means, and they are multiplying. By these effusions, I do not mean merely the quickening of the spiritual sensibilities, but the tangible, felt effusions upon the soul of an extra and outward influence to correspond with the phrase, "The Holy Ghost fell upon them as upon us at the beginning;" Apostle, "The power of the Lord fell upon me, and all the people."-See Life of Valton, p. 122.

How vast the resources at her command. This

is the moral omnipotence with which the Church must be invested, in order to save the world. The apostles "turned the world up side down" by it, and the same results will, unquestionably, follow at all times, when the same means are applied. Its workings commenced upon the day of Pentecost, and the results of that day were owing, not to the physical miracles of the occasion, but to the divine influence which accompanied them, and applied their teachings to the conscience and the heart. If the miracles alone were the cause of the conversion of the 3,000, we should expect to have seen a different result to the Saviour's miracles, and those which attended his death and resurrection. But it was not them; it was the overwhelming power of the Holy Ghost which wrought the work. And, if so, it was Christianity acting out its own perpetual power, and declaring its own measure, and establishing its own precedent, to be imitated repeatedly, "till the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord." It will be readily conceded, that a measure of divine influence is necessary for the progress of God's cause; but, we apprehend, that a very low and unworthy view of the largeness of that measure obtains among men. If I assume the revelations of the day of Pentecost as that measure, only modified by the weakness or strength of faith in the Church, it may excite surprise, and possibly subject me to the charge of

being visionary or enthusiastic; but will not reason and experience bear me out in the assumption? The fact that supernatural attestation has been given proves its necessity somewhere. From his very perfection, God can never do anything unnecessarily (not in the sense of fixed fatality, but of reason and the fitness of things). These perfections require, also, that all that He does shall be done in the best manner.

Now, man's mind is made in all ages to commune with the supernatural. His demand for a religion proves this; and his investiture of the claims of religion always, not merely in the fact that Deity demands his homage, but in the concurring fact, that He makes that demand in a certain way, viz., by supernatural agencies, proves the reasonable presumption of our view.

Let us here recall the point which we have already established, that to convert the world was the grand design of the gospel dispensation.

Now, to accomplish this, several facts and principles must be met and provided for.

1st. The religion of the multitude is usually made up of opinions taken upon trust; which opinions are rarely the result of examination and inquiry, but of accident and habit. Therefore, in the absence of corroborative evidence, they are usually fortified by prejudice or bigotry; and, hence, a change of religion does not easily take place.

But man possesses a natural reverence for what is supposed to be divine; and, hence, if the impression of the divinity of one religion can be made stronger than the belief of the divinity of another, he will abandon his belief, and venerate the object of the impression. True, he may willfully refuse to transfer his allegiance, but this raises the distinct question of motives, with which I at present have nothing to do. The possibility of conviction is now the query. Now, suppose that the religion of Christ presents its claims upon the votaries of false systems, they will never receive it, until they know it to be of God. But how shall that knowledge be obtained? Not by a course of rational induction; for, had they the time and ability, they have not the inclination. Not by human testimony alone, for it were suicidal to establish such a principle. Not by the evidence of historical miracles, for that must come through human testimony, which will be rebutted by human testimony. Not by the induction of the few thoughtful and intelligent declared to all, for that is but the testimony of human belief opposed by belief. I do not pretend, indeed, that their testimony and belief are equally authoritative with ours; but, to unthinking and prejudiced minds, it would prove sufficient to lead them to reject its claims. How, then, I repeat, shall they be convicted of its divinity? The only reply must be, by evident and

undeniable miracles. Hence, the miracles of the apostolic age. But this reply concedes the principle for which I contend, and the only question now is, Shall these miracles be physical, or spiritual, or both? Physical alone can never do it; for the understanding must be enlightened, and the heart impressed, and made to feel, which the spiritual alone can do. Hence, the supernatural influence which accompanied the physical miracles of the day of Pentecost, and produced results which merely physical miracles never had and never could produce. This supernatural influence makes its own impression of divinity, and is its own vindicator. Hence, those who feel it, believe the religion to be of God, because its accompanying influence they know to be from Him, by an inward and unmistakable consciousness.

Besides, this supernatural attestation is the highest kind of evidence, and hence, if rejected, no other testimony can avail; and all addition is redundant: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded though one arose from the dead." Not that they had so much evidence that supernatural physical additions would be voiceless, but they had had the superior, and now the inferior would be useless!

It is the highest because the most direct and authoritative! All conclusions from mere physical miracles are deductive. This needs no deduction, admits of none—it is an unmistakable "Thus saith the Lord," spoken directly to the consciousness. To coerce a feeling assent, but not compel trust, is the great idea! And to secure this "There may be degrees of divine influence, which, under certain conditions and for a season, are irresistible; just as, under certain conditions, merely human influences are so."—Steward.

Again. In providing a religion for man, God regarded him not only as to what he ought to be, but especially as to what he is! Viewing him as he is, any system, which contemplates elevating and restoring him, must be supernatural in its character, and consequently must be always supernaturally attested. Further, a supernatural religion, without supernatural means and appliances, is a mere mockery of man's helplessness and depravity!

But in this divine influence we have the attestation of the truth, the means of conviction, and the appliances of conquest! Without it, although the intellectual assent may be given to all the truths of the gospel, it may not affect the heart.

It is true, the will may decide to act righteously upon the convictions of the understanding; but, in the question of the world's conversion, the mere possibility that men can be saved by the exercise of their own free will is not to satisfy! The all absorbing inquiry is—Will they yield? And, in providing an agency by which to render his

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Church effective in the accomplishment of that work. God did not seek one by which they might be saved merely, but by which they would be saved! One which could be safely relied upon to prove effectual in the general experience, after estimating all the contingencies of human volition! Such seems to have been the demand of the occasion. And now it only remains to decide whether such an extraordinary and constant interposition of divine influence, or the feeble and uncertain ordinary influences of the means of grace, is best adapted to meet that demand! Would it not be grossly inconsistent for God to profess to call men to himself, and yet send his messengers into the world but a part of the time? Equally so is it, to endow them with a remitting agency! An unfailing and reliable efficiency is their only hope. And "Lo I am with you always-and I will give you a mouth and wisdom," etc., is the Divine pledge of concurrence always! "But then these extraordinary would soon become ordinary influences, and lose their force." Not so. In the souls which yield to its influence, it would continually increase its power, and to those only who resist it would it become weak and voiceless! But we have shown that the demand for it is, that most will yield, therefore, its frequent repetition is an argument in its favor. Besides, the experience of early Christianity and early Methodism confirms

the statement! If the objection be made against the doctrine, that his salvation is designed to be so powerful that man will receive it, that it supposes too great constraint of the free will, remember, it is a fact of experience-yours and mine! Besides, church history declares that unobstructed gospel truth has always triumphed and thus avers the truth of Scripture-" For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it."-Isa. lv. 10, 11.

It is clear that it was the design of God to convert the world at once, upon the first promulgation of Christianity, as proved by the gift of tongues. If it was not, the gift of tongues was given merely that the world might be enlightened and convicted, but with no design to save them, which is equivalent to the assertion that God made them more guilty, by giving them an undesired privilege, merely to damn them the more.

He had made the conversion of the race provisionally possible in the universality of the atonement, and the immediate effectiveness of the appliances of salvation. That it was also cir-

cumstantially possible, if not evident from its contemporaneous history, at least, cannot be denied by a reference to it. True, there were not those facilities for international communication, etc., that we enjoy; but the single fact, that in 300 years 20,000,000 had submitted to the claims of Christianity, shows what might have been done.

Does the history of the Church confirm our conclusion? This proposition may be clearly deduced from it, viz.: That when God's cause has prospered most, such evidences have been most abundant.

Passing the numerous and familiar Scripture passages, "The Holy Ghost fell on them," etc., we come to the testimony of Mosheim, p. 13. Speaking of the early Christian preachers, he says: "Their very language possessed an incredible energy, an amazing power of sending light into the understanding and conviction into the heart!" There are times in the experience of all holy, believing persons when God seems to honor them by the bestowment of a more than usual power: when it would seem as if they could sway the souls around them, and mould the destinies of spirits like yielding wax. "He was a good man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and much people," etc., was the explanation of such experiences, and the secret of primitive success.

In reference to such things, it is proper for us to insist upon the superiority of fact over opinion.

Whatever may be the opinions of those who may oppose the view here advocated, we point to such facts, and demand an explanation upon their own hypothesis. But if all explanation fails (as it certainly will) to meet all the phenomena of the case, and as they are professed illustrations of our view, we are authorized to claim the authority of the fact, to which they can only oppose a personal opinion!

"Last night, at Hanging Heaton, we had a wonderful time; and the power of the Lord was present both to wound and to heal." Life of John Valton, p. 21. Of another occasion he says, p. 23: "I felt the power of God descend upon me, and gave notice to the people that we should have a good time. Presently, cries, and groans, and agonizing prayers were heard all around. . . . . In a while the anguish of their hearts was removed, and their souls entered the glorious liberty of the children of God."

"I remember one day a congregation was gathered, and I was alone, under deep exercise, and it appeared as if there was not one verse in the Bible that I could speak on; all on a sudden, while I was on my knees before the Lord, the following text was powerfully applied: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach glad tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,' Isa. lix. 1. I immediately met the assembly, and, after singing and prayer, gave out the text, and the power of God descended in an extraordinary manner. Previously to this, the people were so hardened that we had only four members in that place; but before I left the house, twenty, who seemed to be that day broken in heart, were added to the society. We continued singing and praying till nearly sunset, and there appeared to be very few in the congregation whose hearts were not touched; my voice being almost lost in the cries of the distressed. O blessed be God! this was a day of marrow and fat things to my poor heart."—Life of Garrettson, p. 51.

"Generally, when these truths, justification by faith in particular, were declared in any large town, after a few days or weeks, there came suddenly on the great congregation (not in a corner, at London, Bristol, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in particular,) a violent and impetuous power, which,

> 'Like mighty winds, or torrents fierce, Did then opposers all o'erturn.'

And this frequently continued, with shorter or longer intervals, for several weeks or months. But it gradually subsided, and then the work of God was carried on by gentle degrees; while that Spirit, in watering the seed that had been sown,

in confirming and strengthening them that had believed,

' Deign'd his influence to infuse, Secret, refreshing as the silent dews.'

And this difference in his usual manner of working was observable, not only in Great Britain and Ireland, but in every part of America, from south to north wherever the word of God came with power."

-Wesley's Sermons, vol. 2, pp. 77, 78.

"After I had begun, the Spirit of the Lord gave me freedom, till at length it came down like a mighty rushing wind and carried all before it. Immediately the whole congregation was alarmed. Shrieking, crying, weeping, and wailing were to be heard in every corner, men's hearts failing them for fear, and many falling into the arms of their friends."—Whitfield's Journal, in Quarterly Review for 1842, p. 602.

"Many had their countenances changed; their thoughts seemed to trouble them, so that the joints of their loins were loosed, and their knees smote one against another. Great numbers cried out aloud in the anguish of their souls. Several stout men fell as though a cannon had been discharged, and a ball had made its way through their hearts. Some young women were thrown into hysteric fits. The sight and noise of lamentations seemed a little resemblance of what we may imagine will be when

the Great Judge pronounces the tremendous sen tence of 'Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.'"—Rev. Jonathan Parsons, in Quarterly Review for 1842, p. 603.

"It was not the manner here to hold meetings all night, as in some places, nor was it common to continue them till very late in the night, but it was pretty often so that there were some that were so affected, and their bodies so overcome, that they could not go home, but were obliged to stay all night at the house where they were. It was a very frequent thing to see a house full of outcries, faintings, convulsions, and such like, both with distress, and also with admiration and joy. There were some instances of persons lying in a sort of trance, remaining for perhaps a whole twenty-four hours motionless, and with their senses locked up; but in the mean time under strong imaginations, as though they went to heaven and had there a vision of glorious and delightful objects."-Mr. Edwards, in Quarterly Review for 1842, p. 604.

"There are marvels in religious history and experience, which philosophy cannot explain, and for which, beyond the mere reference to the supernatural influence, the gospel furnishes no solution. In a popular sense, 'the age of miracles is past;' but facts are constantly occurring to confound all established experience, and put our boasted reasoning powers at fault. Even faith treads softly

amidst these religious phenomena, dreading to believe too much, and fearing to believe too little. A case full of marvel, and not without interest to those fond of investigating the laws of our intellectual and physical constitution, especially as they are adapted to, and under the influence of, our spiritual nature, is recorded by Mr. Lee. Wishing the case to stand just as it appeared to him, we present it in his own simple, but accurate language: 'The case of a young woman, N-W-, being very singular, I will here set down some account of it. At this meeting, on Sunday night, she fell down and lay helpless; they took her into a tent, and sat up with her all night; she continued helpless and speechless all the time. Next morning I had a teaspoonful of water given her. About nine o'clock in the forenoon she revived, and said, Love, love, love! Glory, glory, glory! and then died away again, and appeared like a person in a sweet sleep. In the afternoon, she was taken home in a wagon, but remained as she had been before. Her parents, fearing that there might be some bodily complaint attending her, sent for a physician, who came, and then sent for another. The physicians both agreed that they could not perceive that she had any bodily complaint, believing it to be a supernatural power. They did not attempt to do much for her; only took a little blood, gave a few reviving drops, and

put a small blister on the back part of her neck, but took it off in a little time. One of the physicians continued with her until the following Sunday, but saw very little alteration. She continued thus until Tuesday night, at which time she revived, and spoke freely and sensibly, though apparently in a weak and feeble state. The next day she went about the house, and out of doors, just as she pleased, and was quite well and happy in God. She had been in that state from Sunday night until the next Tuesday night week, which was nine days and nights. I understood that, during that time, she ate nothing, except such things as were poured into her mouth, and she took but very little of that. She was, for the most part of the time, sensible of everything that was said or done to her in her presence. For some days before she revived, she knew all her friends that came to see her, and would answer every question by a nod or shake of the head, and in some cases would hold out her hand to a friend: when spoken to about the state of her soul, and asked if she was happy, she would move her head by way of assent, and raise her eyes, and the tears would flow down her cheeks, which satisfied her friends that she was converted. After she regained her strength, she said that the Lord blessed and converted her soul on the Monday after she was struck down, at which time she spoke, and shouted

Love, love! Glory, glory, glory! I saw her soon after she recovered from this ecstasy, and took her into society, and had no doubt but she was truly happy in God. Many people, who visited her in her helpless condition, were deeply affected, and some of them were brought to think more seriously about their souls. Such a strange circumstance I do not remember to have known or read of before; and yet there was nothing like a trance, or any particular discovery of the other world professed by her.' Now, by whatever method we may attempt to account for this occurrence, whether we trace it to natural or moral causes, to the suspension of nervous susceptibility, or directly to the overwhelming power of spiritual influence, in either case, we are compelled to admit the existence of the fact, detailed as it is by an eye-witness. With the fact as the basis of our inquiries, we may safely leave those who prefer it to empty speculations and unsatisfactory conclusions. Our solution, ascribing it unquestionably to supernatural influence, is reached by a shorter path and a directer way. Taking all the parts of it together, we can conceive of nothing short of 'the great power of God' to meet the demands of the case. Reposing upon that power, every question may be answered, every difficulty solved."-Life and Times of Lee, pp. 420-422.

"But the great meeting at Caneridge exceeded

all. The number that fell at this meeting was reckoned at about three thousand, among whom were several Presbyterian ministers, who, according to their own confessions, had hitherto possessed only a speculative knowledge of religion."—Bangs' History of the M. E. Church, p. 108.

The following is an extract from a published letter, written to Rev. Heman Bangs, by his daughter (wife of Rev. B. Jones, Jackson, La.), who is Principal of a Female Institute:—

Taken from the Daily Christian Advocate for May 21st, 1856.

"In our own family God has powerfully wrought. Of our forty-three boarders, all but four profess to have found peace with God; over thirty during this revival.

"On last Thursday night, when the bell rang for night study, Mr. J. found, upon going into the school-room, the pupils weeping in different parts, and as he sang a few verses of a hymn, they fell upon their knees throughout the room, in bitter, urgent cries for mercy. Seeing their earnestness, Mr. J. called them to quiet, and after an exhortation, in which he laid open the manner in which they were to seek their salvation, he joined in prayer; during which one or two were converted.

"The interest deepened, and sobs and groans were so numerous that there was no effort to lead in prayer; teachers and the converted pupils knelt and prayed with those who were agonizing for mercy, and here and there, and in every part of the school-room, rang out the glad shouts of those that were redeemed from the thraldom of sin. Exhorters were abundant, for each one, as her own soul was blessed, sought out her room-mate or most intimate friend, and pleaded, and in almost every instance, successfully, for them to turn to God.

"At eleven o'clock, some of the brethren from the church, hear-

ing the excitement, came down, and the number of those who had been blessed being called for, twenty-six arose. We had, afterwards, several prayers, and three more were blessed. A work where penitence was more sincere, a sense of sin more profound, or conversions clearer, I have never seen."

I wish to be understood as distinctly disclaiming all desire for such physical manifestations as were often witnessed in such scenes, for I believe, with a certain writer, that "the sudden emotions of the awakened and penitent form not the proper specimens for religious worship. They are the interjections or exclamations of religion; and though they are not to be classed with demure nouns, pronouns, and verbs, yet they have their place, and it would be as unsafe to blot them out of the list of suitable expressions for the affections in the service of religion, as it would be improper and even dangerous to place on them the principal stress in judging religious character."

But it is the divine, spiritual influence, which is the cause of these things, for which I plead; and if such experiences follow as incidental results, in so far as they are purely involuntary, and the work of the Spirit, let them come!

Says Mr. Watson, in the Life of Wesley, p. 83, "He (Mr. Wesley) unquestionably believed in special effusions of the influence of the Holy Spirit upon congregations and individuals, producing powerful emotions of mind, expressed in some instances by bodily affections." He then goes on

to vindicate Methodism from the aspersions cast upon it by some who contended that it was all enthusiasm, and Methodism was its only cause. He declares that in the early ages of Christianity—in the conversion of the barbarous ancestors of European nations—in the days of the Reformation—in the time of the Puritan and Non-Conformist ministers—among the grave Presbyterians of New England, previous to the rise of Methodism—as well as in the time of the Wesleys and Whitefield, and among some modern missionaries—such things have been of frequent occurrence.

"It may be laid down as a principle established by fact, that wherever a zealous and faithful ministry is raised up after a long spiritual death, the early effects of that ministry are not only powerful but often attended with extraordinary circumstances." Why may not an equally zealous and faithful ministry be just as powerful always? Is it more for God's glory to revive his Church by such powerful ministrations, than to preserve it by the same? No; no; the assertion would be libelous in the extreme!

In harmony with the foregoing is a promise made to the desciples, and through them to all believers. Acts i. 8:—"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in

Jerusalem and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

That power was received on the day of Pentecost, but as we have before seen, did not consist merely in the physical miracles of the occasion, but in the supernatural influence which attended them. This will be more evident by referring to the history of the desciples, after the chief priests and scribes had "commanded them (Peter and John) not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus,"-Acts iv. 18. Acts iv. 29-33. "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thy hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness. And with GREAT POWER gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus."

That it was the same "power" with which they wrought upon the day of Pentecost, is evident from the fact that in both instances it was in answer to prayer: in both it was a consequence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and in both the same results followed—a "multitude believed."

The design of each was, that by their "witness"

"of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" men might be saved. If, then, there is the same necessity for that "witness" now, we may claim the promise. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." How shall we claim it? As a part of the gift of the Holy Ghost! Many sanctified Christians are painfully conscious of an undefined longing for something more than they now possess. They feel that all is given up to God-that they desire only to do his will; and yet there seems to be such powerlessness in their exercises, such a want of appropriating faith in their prayers, as is quite unaccountable. They feel sometimes, for years, as if they could not be denied. They must have something, they know not what, to qualify them more perfectly for their work. That something is here revealed. "Ye shall receive power," etc. And the Apostle says again-" We have not received the spirit of fear, but of power," etc. The Holy Ghost may be with the true Christian as certainly, yea, as sensibly, as with the Apostles! Why not also as effectively, so far as spiritual influence is concerned? O how necessary that the Church of God should come up to her privilege!

The Christian may be endowed with the faith which shall claim the "power of God" upon his efforts frequently, if not always.

Almost every experienced Christian can recall

times in his history when the very atmosphere of the place of worship seemed pervaded with a supernatural, awing influence—when even the bold transgressor has been compelled to admit that God was there. And had such events no causes? Yes, the cause was the prayer of faith! O, if it were possible, I would impress upon every mind the importance and the practicability of possessing just such a faith, that thereby might be breathed into the services of the sanctuary a fresher unction, and a mightier power, always. The world will never be converted till this is seen! The Gift of Power is the grand desideratum of the Church!



## CHAPTER III.

HER FAITHFULNESS IN THE USE OF HER RESOURCES.

THE idea of faithfulness, or unfaithfulness, involves a rule of conduct as the standard by which to test the accuracy of the life. It also supposes a comparison of the conduct with the rule, and that the result is found in the term used. We propose to test the faithfulness of the Church; and in doing so, we shall first show what is her Present State, and, second, compare her actual achievements with her possible attainments, and regard the last as the standard of duty.

1st. Her Present State.

As a social organization, the first question that is presented is—Is her organization complete? With a feeble or imperfect system, we cannot expect the success to which we would be entitled, were it perfect in its arrangements, and effective in its execution.

With perhaps a single exception, the Church may be regarded as a complete structure. And that exception may be more a failure of application than an organic defect. We refer to the very inadequate provision which exists for training children and youth to the service of God and the Church. The Sabbath-school, it is true, fills an important part, and nobly meets an immense and primary responsibility. But we need something more! As it now is, comparatively few Christian parents have a realizing view of their responsibility to their offspring; and hence, with a few dry lessons of morality, and distant hints concerning the importance of piety, they allow them to wander off and glean from every source the noxious influences which prematurely ripen the character for evil and destruction. And when the day of maturity comes, in which these parents hope to see their children embrace religion, they are surprised at their sullen obduracy, or their open defiance of the truth. They forget that they are now reaping the bitter fruit that is the legitimate growth of principles which, by parental negligence, were suffered to be implanted in their early years.

O could we hear the beseeching tone of agony which those pure spirits utter in their inmost consciousness, when thus abandoned to the scathing influence of this world of sin, we would call upon the Church to advance and throw around them her own sheltering arms, and clasp them to her own nourishing breast, and bid them grow up in their

purity and love.\* Why has she slept so long? With thousands upon thousands lingering upon her very threshold, all justified and purified in the blood of the Lamb, why has she so long clung to the suicidal policy of turning them from her portals, till-their hearts all callous, their feelings all estranged, their desires all groveling, their affections all "earthly, sensual, devilish"—they are arrested by the agonies of remorse, and with broken hearts turn to the Saviour for compassion and for peace! And then, after all this suffering, all the expenditure of effort necessary to produce this result, then invite them to her fold! A paltry recompense, indeed, is this, for the murderous suspicion and unbelief which exposed them to all these perils! Here is a most glaring error, a palpable defect, nay, a high-handed outrage upon the tenderest sympathies and most loving care of the Saviour of men! And why should it be so? With all the rights of the justified Christian, the child may, does, by its helpless innocence does claim, all the protecting, nurturing power of the Church of Christ. But alas! that claim is disregarded, and the Church, thus recreant to her trust, goes out to seek recruits from the serried ranks of the world, and what wonder that she seeks almost in vain!

<sup>\*</sup> We use the term purity as indicative only of a state of justification.

God never designed that the Church should be supplied by conquest alone! No. He designed that generation after generation should grow up within her pale; endowed with all the attributes of an efficient practical Christianity. Now we must labor years to secure a convert, and years more before he is prepared to serve us as efficiently as he might have done in earlier years, had his faculties never been perverted so cruelly and needlessly by sin; and then, just as he is thoroughly drilled for the warfare, he dies and leaves the Church the same long, dreary forbidding process with his successor! Here, we say, is a fundamental error with triple elements. We bind our hands, when we might glean sheaves by thousands, and then go out, after the storm and the scorching sun and the blighting mildew and the speedy decay have wrought their work, and here and there, amid the ruins of the golden grain, gather up a spotted fragment and garner it away; while, if, with unshackled hands, we had gleaned at first, every glittering trophy would have added strength, for the gleaning yet to be.

Suppose for an instant the fact were reversed, and the Church were alive to this duty. Her 10,000,000 members would certainly bring 10,000,000 more in joyous innocence to tread her courts, and grow to maturity amid her sanctifying influences, and thus, instead of a generation of

soldiers drawn from amid the dwarfing influences of earth, we should have 10,000,000 mighty men of valor—"sons of Benjamin who could cast a stone straight to the mark with either hand" and do good execution for the Lord of Hosts! Then, when they assault the diminished ranks of the god of this world, who can tell how speedily the tide of conquest might roll onward to its final flow?

Does the machinery that we have work harmoniously in all its parts? In an organization like this, with so pure a design, and affecting such numerous and diversified interests, every part should work with perfect precision, and no jars or collisions should mar the beauty of its evolutions. But considering the frailties of humanity, perhaps it is too much to expect such harmony in the Church on earth, at least before the millennial day. But are there not far too many clashings and breaks, and imperfections of many kinds now observable? How little of the tender love is now exhibited toward one another by different parties, which was once the chief badge and crowning glory of Christianity! Look at the egotistic assumptions of sectaries on every hand, as if their creed were the only orthodoxy, and their system the only embodiment of ecclesiastical wisdom extant: and listen to their oracular denunciations of all opposing theories, as if they were the very

quintessence of heterodoxical absurdity and iniquity. Examine almost every theological library, and you will find it composed to a great extent of a collection of logical cinders, gathered from the fires of religious controversy! Too often, zeal for denominational opinions is understood, or at least honored, as the marrow of gospel devotedness. Jealous rivalry, fiery denunciation, mutual recrimination, or a repulsive "caste"-ship far more reprehensible than that of the superstitious Hindoo, is patent to every acute observer. I do not say that these things are universal. No, thank God they are not! They are only foul blots, huge excrescences upon the surface of our Zion; but they must be known to be eradicated.

In the internal experience of the various denominations, there is much over which we are called to mourn; but as it would consume too much time to specify particulars in each, we may be permitted to take the M. E. Church as the representative of the whole.

It is evident, notwithstanding our past and present prosperity, that there are *tendencies* pregnant with evil in the development of our economy.

The first is, the stationing propensity of the Church and ministry. Whatever of effectiveness we, as a church, possess over those who hold the same doctrines with ourselves, is owing, in a great measure, to the system of itinerancy. This system

needs no defense. Its own history is its best vindication. By it, mainly, we have grown from nothing, in less than 100 years, to the number of 621,135, in the M. E. Church South; 799,431 in the M. E. Church; 114,754 in the separate bodies, and 11,310 in the Canada Connection-making a total of 1,546,620 members, and a ministry, traveling and local, of upwards of 20,000! an increase utterly without a parallel in the history of the world! Yet there is a tendency to restrict this method of usefulness. Some of our leading minds are verging towards a kind of Congregational Methodism, the effects of which, we fear, would be paralyzing to our energies, if once established. An enlarged and comprehensive sympathy only can fit a man to enter into the spirit of our institutions; and if that be wanting-for him there is nothing but discord in all the revolutions of our church arrangements. The influence of this tendency is to produce an isolation and selfishness of feeling utterly at war with the essential spirit of Methodism.

This selfishness leads to the adoption of such measures to secure popular preachers, to promote the interests of particular societies, as are at equal antipodes with the genius of itinerancy.

The rapid multiplication of "stations"—in part the result of this tendency—is the source of another evil. Not unfrequently, the two, three or four societies, constituting a circuit, resolve to break up the circuit, and each society support its own pastor.

Thus—to illustrate by an instance under the observation of the writer—three societies who have failed to support two ministers, now resolve to sustain three! In some cases this is no doubt expedient, because the augmented service would secure a corresponding increase of the means of support. But when the business resources and population are both feeble, and both nearly stationary, it seems to be unnecessarily embarrassing the work. But the division is effected, perhaps, in several such instances.

This proportionably increases the demand for preachers; but the supply is already inadequate, and the result is, many of the smaller stations must be left "to be supplied," or depend upon the uncertain services of the local ministry.

In either case, the station usually declines—lingers a few years in hopeless imbecility, and dies. Another result is, the minister often finds an insufficient support, and is thus driven into the vortex of debt or of speculation, which divides the attention and injures his usefulness; or, if he be so fortunate as to possess a little personal property, is compelled to spend it for his subsistence, and look forward to the time when his children will require to be educated, and have no means to secure it.

Many thus become discouraged and leave the work, while it operates as an effectual barrier to numbers who would otherwise engage in it.

This evil is not confined to one denomination, but is felt in all. A writer in the Philadelphia Christian Observer states, that "the average salary of Presbyterian clergymen in the State of Tennessee is less than \$200 per annum. The Bishop of Maine declared, that nearly one-third, i.e., 50 out of 155 of the ministers of the Protestant Episcopal Church in that State, had left the ministry between 1847 and 1853, chiefly from want of an adequate maintenance."

A reverend rector, writing to the Diocesan Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the city of New York, says that he has been again and again called upon to aid clergymen destitute of the daily necessaries of life, and adds, "I know educated, respectable and worthy clergymen, who, to avoid unqualified want, and the possible starvation of their families, and with an unabated love for their sacred calling, are now engaged in secular (and I do not here mean academical or literary) avocations. It is not uncommon for pastors of congregations, in hopeless poverty, to relinquish the scene of their loved and chosen labors in city and country, and teach schools, or give private lessons, or engage in the department of ill-remunerated literary labors."

Another evil, we believe, has grown, in part, out of this policy, although chargeable more to the depravity of human nature, than to the stationing tendency.

Having their minister constantly with them, the people soon learn to depend too much upon him, and remit their own exertions, especially in the busy seasons of the year; and hence arises the necessity of a winter campaign, to revive the dormant energies of the Church, and seek accessions from the ranks of the world. Then comes the toilsome effort, more or less protracted, with greater or less results; and then the sinking down into the former apathetic state, the straying away of converts, and the general stagnation of spiritual interests; until the kindred efforts of the succeeding winter effect another revolution, to be followed by the same reaction of feeling and revulsion of effort as before. I do not object to revival efforts: I love them. There is not a work on earth in which my heart so delights to engage. But I do most earnestly protest against the sentiment (in effect amounting to belief) of the Church—that banishes the expectation of such scenes from more than half the year, and practically proclaims to the world that the "day of salvation" is the winter season! To such an extent has this already reached, that in many country places, and perhaps I might say throughout the country generally, I

know that the world does not expect to be saved except in the fall and winter. And has it come to this? Have we only a winter salvation? No—no—most emphatically, no! Our salvation is a present salvation. And until the Church shall inscribe upon all her door-posts the constant invitation, and sustain it by continual effort, we must mourn over backsliding converts and a suspicious world!

Another evil consequence of the stationing practice is—each station, being isolated in sympathy, is left to grapple with all the sectional prejudices and social evils of its locality alone; and often, when the pressure of these circumstances is great, it measurably succumbs to their influence, and thus loses some of its primitive purity and power, which might have been retained by an intimate union with the Church at large.

Aside from uniformity of doctrines and usages, the only connecting links which now remain are camp-meetings, and an itinerant ministry. The first, by their infrequent occurrence, make but a feeble impression; and it is not to be expected that preachers will ordinarily make much effort to correct the local abuses with which they are brought into contact, in some hopeless form, in almost every charge. Thus the evil spreads as it has been spreading—"it is only a little thing" in each locality; yet sufficient to prevent us from preserving our ancient purity.

The difficulty attending the appointment of the preachers to their fields of labor, is another proof of the inharmonious workings of our arrangements. Not that it is necessarily so. Experience proves the contrary. Not that it is peculiar to ourselves! The real cause of the evil inheres in all systems, because an offshoot of the unsanctified nature found in all. Other churches may not have the particular grievances of which we complain, but they have those which are of as great a magnitude, and which are peculiar to themselves; and hence, by selecting one church as the exponent of all, we save time, and do no injustice to any.

It is both natural and right that preachers and people should have preferences, and express them if they wish. But when the preference finds expression in the unmethodistic word demand, there is ground of complaint. Remember, we speak of tendencies!

The writer has known of instances of such a chilling reception of preachers, who were sent, instead of those "asked for," to certain places, that it effectually prevented their usefulness. And he has known societies which have been favored with a preacher, who has been "petitioned for" by other churches, to be looked upon by the disappointed ones with most unbrotherly feelings.

I hope these instances are not numerous; but,

that there is a *tendency* here, cannot be denied. Let us guard well our Christian charity, and trust our beloved Bishops without a fear, until they shall prove themselves unworthy of our trust.

Our views must necessarily be based upon local wants, and hence be one-sided, and lacking in the comprehensiveness necessary to appoint so many to their most appropriate fields of labor.

3d. What are her material interests?

Over these, we may rejoice with less abatement than over any other phase of the Church's present state.

Her pecuniary resources are immense. The amount of taxable real and personal estate of evangelical Christians, in this Union was in 1854, \$1,847,094,373.

The number of Christians, 3,761,903.

Their churches accommodated, besides themselves, 9,114,966 of the population.

Now, add to the above a proportionable amount for those accommodated,

Thus . . \$1,847,094,373 4,485,448,306

Total . . \$6,332,542,679

The tenth of the simple interest of which, at 6 per cent., would be \$37,995,256, as at the least computation the available annual means of the Church in our land.

Besides the above, their church property amounted in 1850 to about \$71,000,000.

The educational institutions of the land are nearly all under the control of the evangelical denominations.

In 1850 there were 119 colleges and universities, with 1,100 professors and teachers, and 12,000 students. Also 44 theological schools with 127 professors, and 1,372 students.

Of the above 119 colleges, 107 were under the control of evangelical denominations. Also 42 of the 44 theological schools.

So that about 1,122 of the 1,227 professors, and 12,300 of the 13,372 students, were under the same influence.

At the same time there were 17 law schools, with 37 professors, and 797 students; and 37 medical schools with 242 professors, and 5,451 students.

Whatever proportion of the law and medical schools we may claim as ours in influence, the fact that all but 12 of the colleges, and all but 2 of the theological schools, are actually enlisted with us, is a cause of fervent gratitude, and a ground of cheering hope.

The M. E. Church alone, backward as she has been in this respect, from the circumstances of her growth, and scarcely worthy of a separate notice, has 14 colleges, 2 theological schools, and upwards

of 70 seminaries or academies, most of them of high grade, including 11 female colleges.

The press is the great instrument of power in our midst, and it has been laid under contribution in no stinted manner to accomplish the purposes of evangelism.

The various benevolent societies of our Union issued in the year 1854 not less than 30,000,000 tracts, papers, and volumes; and in 1850 the circulation of the religious periodicals and papers alone, aside from tracts and volumes, reached the enormous number of 33,645,484 copies: the number of pages none can tell! In the same year the whole number of newspapers and periodicals circulated in the States was 426,409,978\* divided in character as follows:—

Literary and	1 M	isce	llaı	aeo	us					77,877,276
Neutral and	Inc	lep	end	ent						88,023,953
Political .	13.		٠		<b>)</b> •		٠			221,844,133
Religious .										33,645,484
Scientific .										4,893,932
Not defined						٠		٠		125,200
Not defined	•		•		•	۰	*	٠	٠	120,200

426,409,978

Now, as one-fifth of the population over 10 years of age belong to the churches, we may claim one-fifth of all the circulation besides the professedly religious as conducted by church members, and directly religious in sentiment, which would be

<sup>\*</sup> In 1853 they had increased to 624,000,000.

78,552,898, to which add the religious, 33,645,484, and we have a total of 112,198,382, or more than one-fourth of the circulation of the country, and no doubt a considerable proportion of the remaining three-fourths are favorably inclined toward religious enterprises. Now behold the Church as she stands before us! armed with the heaven-wrought weapons of saving truth, commissioned and defended by Jehovah, possessing a social organization, simple and powerful, with wealth at her command equal to her largest desire, with the almost unquestioned control of the higher educational interests of the land, with one-fourth the issues of the newspaper and periodical press directly or indirectly consecrated to her purposes, and with one-seventh of the population enlisted beneath her banners-what may she not do for God and souls?

Were she perfectly animated by the spirit that should inspire her, she would present a spectacle of moral interest and grandeur unequaled in the history of our race.

The magnificent march of Persia's ancient millions, as they sought the homes of Greece, sinks into utter insignificance compared with this. *That* only told a despot's power and prefigured a nation's fall! *This* tells the *power of God*, and is the presage of a world redeemed!

The Methodist Book Concerns alone (M. E. Church) issued during the year 1855:—

4th. What is her character for doctrinal and practical purity?

In speaking of doctrinal purity, I do not mean the tenets of sects, but the essential doctrines of the gospel.

The M. E. Church will compare favorably with any other in this respect; I will, therefore, consider her as the representative of all. With a single exception, the fundamental doctrines of the Bible are still retained by our people. That exception is Christian perfection! True, it is still retained in our standard authors, and our preachers are required to emphasize it in their ministrations; but, unless appearances greatly deceive, there are thousands upon thousands in our Israel who utterly ignore it, or regard it of so little consequence as to be unworthy of their attention.

And often, when it is insisted upon, it is in such a cold, heartless strain, or attended with so many metaphysical niceties and abstruse speculations, as to leave the impression that the preacher himself does not half believe it!

O when will we learn the all-important truth in effective preaching, that "we must be self-convicted of what we would convict others!"

We may preach holiness to the Church until we die, and unless our hearts indite the matter, and we preach "with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven," we shall but intellectually enlighten the Church to her deeper guilt, while we pour upon the heart no tide of feeling to assist her onward.

It is true, we introduce the theme into those parts of our discourse from which it could not be excluded without marring their doctrinal beauty, but too often only as the painter does his darker shades, merely to set off some other part, without pressing it home upon the conscience with all the tremendous motives which a God of holiness has hung around it.

The lamented Hedding musingly exclaimed—"Fifty years ago, the Methodist preachers and people were a holy people; they were so as a body." Is there no reflection here? Does he not intimate a different state of things now?

What is our practical purity?

It will not be easy satisfactorily to answer the question here proposed.

Our views of the character of church piety are so easily biased by local representations, educational predilections, and the stand-point from which our views are taken, that most frequently they are exceedingly unreliable. Yet there are principles involved, whose working cannot be wholly concealed, and which, if put in the crucible of unbending logic, will yield a safe conclusion.

It is to be expected, that, amidst all the good, there will be blended more or less of evil; but still we should keep before us the example given us, and remember that the professing Christian should be a "character of universal holiness;" and although a measure of wrong cannot be prevented by any disciplinary rules or administrative acts, yet the purity of the Church requires a knowledge of the threatening dangers, in order to provide for them in season, to trench, if not banish, them.

The purity of any church is always in the ratio of the Christian consistency of its members. And as consistency implies the possession of all those graces of the spirit which belong to the Christian character, we shall expect to find a perfect correspondence between the graces enjoyed and the purity exhibited. And as faith and love are the foundation of all the graces, or the primary principles from which all others spring—if we can show the condition of these two, we need not dwell long upon their mere modifications, to be prepared to estimate the purity of the Church.

Faith in self and in God is the first requisite of church purity. And it is just as necessary to have faith in self as in God. Indeed, it were impossible to believe in God, unless we first believe in self. Here is a grand defect in the faith of the Church.

In looking for God to do all, we forget that we have a work to do to prepare his way before him.

We must be assured, nay, assure ourselves that we can believe, else we shall wait for God to give us faith, until disappointment drive us to despair.

There seems to be a sentiment in the Church to the effect—faith is something that must be poured down upon us or given, or imparted to us in some form, by some external spiritual agency. It is a great mistake. "What saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, even the word of faith which we preach." Faith is a development, a growing up, a gushing out, a reaching for, not an extrinsic reception, not an implanted gift, but a spontaneous growth! Every man has much more faith than he ever dared believe he possessed. Let him clear away the rubbish which encumbers and almost buries his own consciousness, and open his heart to the genial sunshine of God's truth, and the invigorating showers of divine grace, and stir it up by faith in self, and he will soon find the springing verdure of a faith in God, that will nourish and sustain the whole herd of minor graces. The faith of the Church is lamentably deficient. and we believe that the reason is, want of faith in self. She must believe that she can exercise the faith upon which God has suspended his spiritual blessings, or all her desires will be in vain.

"Such things are too high for me, I never can

attain unto them," is the sentiment which paralyzes all her energies, and effectually evades the claims of Heaven. It is precisely the sin which turned Israel from his coveted inheritance, and dug a nation's grave beneath the shades of the howling wilderness. While "we are fully able to go up and possess the land," was the expression of a faith in self, which dared to grapple the conditions of divine intervention, and calculate upon results which the arm of Omnipotence alone could achieve. If we had more faith in self, we might have more in God. That there is a serious deficiency of faith in God is seen in a single circumstance—the slow increase of the Church. Again, taking our Church as the representative, let us look at facts. No one can question but that, with such a faith as she might possess, at least seven-tenths of all our Sunday School scholars would be converted. "But you cannot expect all fit subjects of conversion to be saved in a year." I answer, why not? If the Church did her duty we should see it. Does God wish onehalf or one-tenth of them to live in sin another year? Surely not. Having made provisions for their present salvation, he offers it not in mockery, but in sincerity, that it may be accepted.

In 1854, our schools numbered 553,065 scholars, of whom 17,494, or one in every thirty-two, were converted, being but little more than half of the actual increase of the schools for the same length of

time, and making each scholar run thirty-one chances to one against being converted. Now, can the faith of that Church be right in leaving more than half a million souls, in the most impressible period of their existence, to live on under the hardening influence of a deceitful world, sinful natures, and evil examples? Is it right? Nay, are we not guilty of blood, the blood of souls, in such fearful recreancy to our trust? Look upon this picture, dear reader, until its every lineament shall be woven into the texture of your thoughts, and scorched by the power of truthful conviction into your very soul—then—look on this:—

In 1849, out of a population of 22,491,305, 34,668 died between the age of five and fifteen years. At the same ratio, in 1854, out of a population of 26,041,890, 40,164 died of the same ages. The whole number, between five and fifteen, in 1850, was 6,131,897, of a population of 23,191,876, being more than one-fourth of the population. At the same ratio, in 1854, there were of those ages, 6,885,436, and of them 40,164 died, or one out of every one hundred and seventy-one; being 3,234 for our schools in that year. Now place the numbers side by side—

553,065 in attendance, 17,494 converted, 3,234 died.

And following the ratio established, viz., one in every

thirty-two converted only 101 of them died converted, leaving the awful fact staring us in the face, that 3,133 of our Sunday School scholars are dropping yearly into eternity, from the very embrace of the Church, all unprepared for its dread scenes.\* The mind shudders in view of the fearful picture; and it is with painful repugnance that we thus, with the coolness of mathematical calculation, estimate such soul-harrowing facts as these. We would fain drop our pen, and sound the alarm which the fire shut up in our bones impels us to; but no, look further, probe the fearful wound to its very bottom. Now, supposing eight years to be the average time of attendance of all our scholars. In 1847, they numbered 340,230, and, in 1854, 553,065, showing an increase of 212,835. To this add the 19,600 increase of 1847, to make out the eight years, and we have a total increase of 232,435. The number of conversions during the same time was 94,980; being 137,455 less than the actual increase. To this add the 308,334 unconverted, then in the schools, and we have 445.789, who have left our schools within that time, or remain in them with no hope of conversion.

<sup>\*</sup> Some may be too young to be considered accountable, and others may have been converted in former years. Supposing, then, that they have attended three years, it will then give us but 303 converted ones, and a very small proportion of the remaining 2,941 can be thought irresponsible.

And here the fact stands out with alarming relief. For the last eight years, we have been turning over to the tender mercies of a damning world 38,542 of the lambs of the flock every year. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! And during the same time our average increase has been 29,054, and average conversions 11,872, leaving us in the reception of 17,182 more annually, to come to us for the rudiments of salvation, and then be turned to the mysteries of iniquity for their practical education.

Our average number of scholars in each school is now 56, and less than two conversions for each school, equal to about five conversions for three schools.

For the last eight years, our average nur	nber
of schools has been	. 8,208
Average annual increase,	. 29,054
" conversions	. 11.872

being less than four increase for each school, annually, and but little over one conversion for each school.

These are melancholy facts; but they are worthy of our most serious attention. "Feed my lambs," was the Saviour's injunction; but, alas! to what purpose do we feed them? When we remember that Sunday School instruction is necessarily a hardening or softening process, with what zeal ought we to labor, lest any should go from our

midst, to wrest their early training to their deeper and surer destruction?

If the faith of the Church is her chief dependence, in all her efforts to extend her bounds and enlarge her conquests, then we assert, that our faith must be feeble, indeed, to allow of such results. And if our labors are thus inefficacious in the best and most hopeful field, what may we expect when she endeavors to cultivate the sterile soil of the world. Let us again look at facts. It is a fact worthy the place of an axiom in church history, that as is her faith, so is her aggressive spirit and success. We numbered, in 1854, 755,916, and our increase was 31,910; deducting the 17,494 converted in the Sunday School, and most of whom probably were received into the Church, we have 14.416 converted from the world. A cause for rejoicing, certainly; but look again. It has taken 755,916 professed Christians a whole year to ac complish this work: fifty-two a whole year to save one! Alas for the hopes of the world, if this is a sample of Christian success.

But some may think that the whole 31,910 should be included, without deducting the Sunday School converts. Well, even then, it takes twenty-four church members a whole year to save one soul from the Sunday School or the world! Again, we say, alas for the world! Its hope faileth!

It is estimated that there are 10,000,000 Chris-

tians in the world. At the ratio that our branch of Methodism is saving men (and it is acknowledged to be the most efficient system known), viz., occupying twenty-four a year to save one, the whole ten million would save 416,666 per year. At this ratio of progression, to make the world nominally Christian, like the United States, i. e., to make real Christians of one-seventh of the 990,000,000 remaining population of the world (viz., 141,428,571), it will take nearly 85 years; allow 100 years. And to make it really Christian, 140 years; say 170 years. A short time, indeed, it seems, to work so stupendous a change. But, remember, the Church ought to have saved it long since, and the blood of a world redeemed but lost, and lost by negligence and recklessness, cries unto God from all her 999,000,000 souls for Him to awake to judgment!

"One hundred years—'tis time too short—the world has never seen such results in so confined a space," says the lazy dreamer of time enough. One hundred years! it is but just ahead; but every one is freighted with undying interests! Every one carries a mighty cargo of God-like spirits! where shall they go?—whither shall they fly?—to what refuge can they betake themselves? From heathenish darkness and sensual blindness they go reeking in their sins. From reptile deities and insect gods they go to face the Lord Jehovah!

Where shall they rest? What is their hope? "Heaven help them," say you? Nay, but Heaven cannot help them! Heaven has deputed the Church to bear the saving remedy—the only specific-the sole life-cure-and the Church has kept it back; and now see them go; what throngs! how they rush on to certain doom; count them! count them all! see, they roll by myriads; one dark, seething mass of humanity; down, down the slope of time, they plunge; they plunge and they are gone! But hear you not that wail; 'tis the moan of the helpless; 'tis the cry of the despairing; 'tis the groan of the lost; 'tis the shriek of the damned! There they are-3,333,333,333 of them, all souls for whom Jesus died-gone in that hundred years. Count them! More than 211 years it would take you to do it, at sixty every minute, and twelve hours every day. I say all lost-but no, not all lost. Redeeming mercy may save some, may snatch, here and there, a brand; but the most are there, and for no other reason than that the Church has been unfaithful to her trust. It is true they might be saved even as heathens; but remember our theory is that the world might have been evangelized long ago, and then they certainly would be saved.

At the rate that Christianity has progressed since its first promulgation, it will take, instead of 100 years, 183,645 years to convert the world,

and, during that time, 6,121,499,999,387 souls will pass away, and to count them, as above, would take one man 388,222 years, or more than sixty-six men from the creation of the world to the present time. But why multiply words? As well endeavor to make the finite grasp the infinite, as to impart to any mind the comprehension of numbers so vast as these! And yet they all indicate souls—souls for whom Christ died.

Oh! is there faith on the earth? Why, then, are not the barriers thrown up, that shall say to this flood of ruin, "Thus far shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed!" O for the baptism of heavenly fire! for the consuming zeal of the Son of God. Faith, Faith, Faith, we need. O Lord, increase our faith!

Other evidences of a serious and alarming deficiency of faith in the Church might be adduced, but the above will be sufficient.

If faith is thus feeble, how is it in regard to love?

The annunciations of God's will are so clear and decisive upon this point, that there can be no question concerning duty. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., is the requirement and its measure! Does the experience of the Church answer to this demand? Lest we should be considered as inclined to censoriousness, we will again resort to facts, as more authoritative

than mere opinion, however clearly expressed, or plausibly presented.

Wherever such love exists, will be seen earnest and persevering efforts for the salvation of souls, and a hearty devotion to all the interests of his kingdom, producing an enlarged benevolence, and constant search for new and wider fields of cultivation. In other words, it will eradicate the selfish feelings of the heart, and impart to its possessor a missionary zeal and energy which will continually send him "to the regions beyond."

We have already shown the vast resources of the Church; and it will be proper here to invite the reader to turn back and peruse that part of our subject again; then, with those facts fresh in his mind, go with me in the inquiry—Is the benevolence of the Church at all commensurate with its means?

In 1854 the amount of taxable real and personal estate in the Union was \$9,000,000,000. Or, estimating the population over ten years of age at 18,351,805, it is equal to \$491 for each. But this is an under-estimate for members of the Church, because they constitute the most sober and industrious of the population, and consequently are more thrifty as a class. But taking this as a basis, and multiplying it by the number of church members, viz., 3,761,903, we have as the amount actually possessed by them, \$1,847,094.373.

The simple interest of which would be, for a single year, at one per cent., \$18,470,943.

But the aggregate given for all benevolent purposes was only \$2,450,650, being nearly one-eighth of the interest at one per cent. But even this is far too high an estimate, for this amount was contributed by members of the congregations as well as Christians.

Assuming that the aggregate church accommodation will indicate the number of donors more correctly than church membership does, let us try this calculation. If 12,876,866 be the number accommodated, the aggregate wealth will be \$6,322,541,206, the simple interest of which, at one per cent., for one year, will be \$63,225,412; and the ratio of the amount contributed, to the aggregate possessed, being about one twenty-sixth part of the interest for one year, at one per cent., or equal to the interest, at six per cent., for two and one-third days!

Or, to express it individually—if church members alone raised the amount, it would be sixty-five cents per member for all benevolent purposes.

But, supposing the congregations to share, it will be nineteen cents each. This includes contributions to the Bible; Tract; Sunday School; Missionary, Home and Foreign; Colonization; Anti-Slavery; Education; Peace Society; etc., etc.

Now, pause and contrast this meagre amount with the ability and duty of those concerned. They profess to have renounced the world—to live only to glorify God—to hold their temporal possessions only as stewards of the gift of God; and yet they only give, to promote his cause, the 156th part of the interest of their possessions for a single year. Is this love? Nay, it is a libel upon the sacred name!

No one can doubt but that Christians might, and ought to give at least two per cent. of the interest of their possessions, or six per cent. for four months out of the twelve, which would then leave them eight months in which to accumulate; but instead of thus giving 120 days' interest each year, they now give about two days and one-third! and claim the other 362 and two-thirds for their own selfish purposes. Two per cent. is far below the Scripture standard. The patriarchs gave at least a tenth of all that they possessed. The Jew gave a third. The early Christians gave all. God requires the tenth of the increase as the least proportion-just as He demands the seventh of the time as the least—and as much more as circumstances may warrant.

But it may be said that the above two per cent. is a large proportion, and that they actually need all the rest for necessary purposes. Then I answer, let them be consistent, and show that it is

necessity, and not pampered luxury, or filthy vice, that makes the demand.

But as long as Christians spend 98 cts. each per year for tea and coffee, and 24 cts. each for that filthy abomination tobacco, let them not plead inability to meet the claims of God.

Look at it! Look at it! O Christian, till you blush for your profession! 19 cts. each per year for all benevolent purposes combined, and 24 cts. each per year for a disgusting weed that no swine in the land would touch! And then 98 cts. each in addition for tea and coffee. Not an absolute necessity, surely, however useful they may be in their proper place! I appeal to all, which is the greatest necessity, to save souls that are perishing, or tea, coffee, and tobacco! Better, better far they were banished from the earth, than that one immortal soul should be lost; and yet for them we Christians alone are spending \$4,631,491 per annum! How many souls would that save? Tell me, ye missionaries, who groan in your exile for money to carry the bread of life to the starving millions around you !-tell me, ye managers and directors of the Bible, Tract, and Sunday School Societies, who spend sleepless nights in devising plans to raise the means you need to carry out your God-like designs-tell me-tell me, how many souls would that save! And when your answer comes, let me write it in characters of blood upon these pages, as a memorial of our

want of love! Nay. Is it 1000, then let me write them all-1000 souls-souls redeemed but lost and damned! let me write them where? Not here alone, let God thunder them from the sky; let him write them out in his own blue arch of heaven in lightning characters that all may read; 1000 souls lost-and lost for what? O tell it not in Gathpublish it not in the streets of Askalon-for tea, coffee, and tobacco! Do not misunderstand me. I do not condemn all indulgence in tea and coffee or other luxuries of life, but I do protest against the niggardly conduct which stuffs and pampers self to the limit of means, and then declines benevolence because of "nothing to give." The amount paid for tobacco by Christians in 1854 was \$902,857. Now if the M. E. Church raised her numerical proportion of the \$2,450,650—say \$492,754 for benevolent purposes-her reward was 27,442 souls, equal to one soul for every \$18 expended! If we might expect the same general result, it would give us for the amount now expended in tobacco 50,159 souls! And for what we now spend for tea, coffee, and tobacco, 257,305 souls!

Nor is this a fanciful supposition; for, in the passage, "bring all your tithes into the store-house," etc., God asserts a relation between the donations of the Church and the blessings of the Spirit.

We have purposely omitted from the above

estimates the amount paid for the support of ministers, for that is in reality no benevolence; as it is worth more in any community than it costs, merely in a pecuniary point of view. It would cost at least double what the pulpit does to have the crime which it prevents!

As a civilizer it is worth more than it costs, and its influence, in perpetuating our free institutions, is of inestimable value. It is the only security for right legislation. It furnishes the cheapest method in existence for securing individual or social happiness, and, as men will have some religion, this prevents the adoption of a far more expensive one. Romanism costs at least sixteen times as much as Protestantism.

But, as some think that this is the Maelstrom which swallows down all the fruits of Christian benevolence, let us look at these facts.

There are in the Union 27,868 ministers, who receive an average salary of \$450, equal to \$12,540,600. or for each attendant 97 cts.; making, for all benevolence and the support of the ministry, for each attendant, per annum, \$1.16; for each Christian, for tea, coffee, and tobacco, \$1.22.

Listen, now, to the words of the Father of Methodism, see Sermons, vol. ii. p. 438: "Who regards those solemn words, 'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.' Of the three rules which are laid down on this head, in the sermon on 'the Mammon of Unrighteousness,' you may find many that observe the first rule, namely, 'Gain all you can.' You may find a few that observe the second, 'Save all you can;' but how many have you found that observe the third rule, 'Give all you can?' Have you reason to believe that 500 of those are to be found among 50,000 Methodists? And yet nothing can be more plain, than that all who observe the two first rules without the third, will be two-fold more the children of hell than ever they were before.

"Oh, that God would enable me once more, before I go hence and am no more seen, to lift up my voice like a trumpet to those who gain and save all they can, but do not give all they can. Ye are the men, some of the chief men, who continually grieve the Holy Spirit of God, and in a great measure stop his gracious influence from descending in our assemblies. Many of your brethren, beloved of God, have not food to eat; they have not raiment to put on; they have not a place where to lay their heads. And why are they thus distressed? Because you impiously, unjustly, and cruelly detain from them what your Master and theirs lodges in your hands on purpose to supply their wants! See that poor member of Christ, pinched with hunger, shivering with cold, half naked! Meantime you have plenty of this world's

goods, of meat, drink, and apparel. In the name of God, what are you doing? Do you neither fear God, nor regard man? Why do you not deal your bread to the hungry, and cover the naked with a garment? Have you laid out in your own costly apparel what would have answered both these intentions? Did God command you so to do? Does he commend you for so doing? Did He entrust you with his (not your) goods for this end? And does he now say, "Servant of God, well done?" You well know he does not. This idle expense has no approbation, either from God or your own conscience. But you say, you can afford it. Oh, be ashamed to take such miserable nonsense into your mouths. Never more utter such stupid cant, such palpable absurdity! Can any steward afford to be an arrant knave? To waste his lord's goods? Can any servant afford to lay out his master's money otherwise than his master appoints him? So far from it, that whoever does this, ought to be excluded from a Christian society." Now, in place of the suffering poor, put the imperiled souls of men, of such infinite worth, and do not these remarks, severe as they are, apply with ten-fold force? Nay, infinitely greater force, as the interests in question are of infinitely greater moment. Besides the comparatively scanty amount contributed, the manner in which it is obtained is another proof of the want of the spirit of liberality in the Church. It is not all the out-flowings of a ready sympathy and an openhearted benevolence which seeks its objects, but rather the cold and frozen current of an untaught principle, which only yields its stores to the steady importunity of the determined solicitor, or to the momentary bursts of enthusiam, caused by the power of a resistless eloquence! God loveth a cheerful giver, and it is a serious question whether much that is raised is acceptable in his sight.

Another general evidence of a want of love in the Church is, a lack of the melting and moving feeling for souls which it once exhibited.

The declared object of her existence was "to spread scriptural holiness over these lands." A Godlike yearning pity for the perishing alone actuated the desire. The early history of the Church showed that she felt the importance and urgency of her mission, and wherever her accredited ambassadors roamed, they imitated the example of the early Jerusalem exiles for the truth—"they went everywhere preaching the word." Not content with visiting the densely populated portion of the land, they threaded every by-way, and sought out every isolated village and township, and even trailed the hunter's tree-marked pathway to his lonely cabin, there to break the bread of life to all who would receive it.

No wonder, then, that such indomitable energy

and perseverance in the ministry wrought out similar results among the laity. Hence, Methodism, as a great whole, was a thoroughly organized aggressive agency, with a due degree of vitality in every part, and while made up of the union of innumerable separate individuals, each separate individual was Methodism personified.

The system seemed to possess such a fusing and transfusing power, that while it melted down the harsher aspects of individual character, it also shed all through that character so much of its own vitalizing element, that action-constant, persevering, and aggressive action-was a necessity of the Hence, the name Methodist became a life. synonym for meddlesome zeal, and obtrusive fanaticism! "Those that have turned the world upside down have come hither also," was the note of alarm that usually accompanied the humble Christian wherever he went. But such zeal could not remain fruitless. It appealed too strongly to the felt wants of the human heart, to pass neglected. Hence, whenever the hardy pioneer of Methodism moved his family into a new settlement, and converted the humble cabin into the temporary prayerroom or chapel, a religious interest, revival, and society soon ensued.

But that intensity of love has suffered a decline, especially in the older and more populous parts of the work. Much of it still exists, it is true, but

far too little to enable us to accomplish our mission. We need to be more deeply imbued with the sentiment, that God has placed us where we are, on purpose to have us save those around us. We should feel that it is our "one great business here below," to draw men to the skies. More of the melting sympathy which constrained the Saviour of mankind to weep over Jerusalem, and which led the Prophet to exclaim, "O that mine head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people," would infuse into our efforts a fresh energy, with glorious results.

There is another tendency in the Church which should be regarded with some suspicion. I refer to that which seeks an exclusively educated ministry. However it may have been with individuals, the fact cannot be denied, that such has ever yet failed to meet the demands of the masses. And we cannot expect it to be otherwise, until the masses shall become so elevated as to be able to appreciate the refinements of thought and style of the educated, and feel the force of their appeals as sensibly as they have those of our fathers. were, to a great extent, destitute of the training of the schools, but they had the honor of a most thorough education for their work. They had what the schools could not give them-a knowledge of the great heart of the people, derived from constant contact with it, in all its various phases; and they possessed the practical sympathy and fellow-feeling with the masses which an actual experience of their wants alone could inspire. Then, with a piety as fervent and as pure as ever burned within the heart of mortals—with a calm reliance upon Divine aid, which defied opposition and courted difficulties—they went out to dare and to do, and noble has been their doing!

O how often has the writer of these lines, while perusing the narratives of their sufferings and their triumphs-how often has he looked upon them with something of that awe which one would feel while gazing upon some superior race of beings; and O how fervently he has wished that some good Elijah among them had dropped his mantle upon him as he passed away! I do not reverence them because they were uneducated! No; I love them for what they were-for what was positive in their character-not for their deficiencies! But there is always a tendency in the exclusively educated ministry to speculation and philosophy, etc.; and here lies the danger! Education, if sanctified, is one of Heaven's best gifts; and, then, the more of it the better! But are we at liberty to repudiate all the suggestions of history, and hope that, with us, the usual course of things will be reversed?

Yet there is a tendency, which, if permitted to

work out its own legitimate ends, would have us all tarry—not "in Jerusalem, until we be endued with power from on high," but in the schools, until familiar with all the rules of fence, forgetful that the more zealous Samuels might have, meantime, issued forth, and hewed a thousand Agags in pieces before the Lord. As a mere adjunct of Methodism it may be useful—nay, indispensable; and as such, and only as such, let it be perpetuated.

In close connection with the foregoing, as an evidence of the want of love, is the partial and incomplete obedience of the Church!

If her love were perfect, her obedience would be entire! But we may safely affirm, that, with two-thirds of the Church, the requirement of perfect obedience to the gospel law of love stands practically as a dead letter upon the pages of inspiration.

Not only as a dead letter, but it is a fact, also, that many of the Church have an actual repugnance to its claims being enforced clearly and pointedly from the sacred desk; and very many covertly oppose it, forgetful that God's word has his authority—not that of social opinion, or conventional ideas, or anything else; and that it is not be squared by any prejudice, or silenced by any opposition. It is not surprising, then, that since the great comprehensive enactment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., upon which all

mere statutes are founded, is practically annulled, that the minor laws which spring from it should be considered of little account.

We will now place a few of the lesser statutes of the law of love in connection with their observance by the Church, that the reader may form his own judgment in the case.

Let us not forget, however, that all sin—that is, all voluntary disobedience of God's law, considering merely our relations to Him-is alike heinous in his sight. The only graduation of which sin is capable arises from our relations to other finite intelligences; and, hence, when ourselves and God alone are concerned, the neglect of a positive precept is as the transgression of a direct commandindeed, it involves the last; hence, an omission may, nay, does partake of the same character and moral turpitude as a commission. In this view, is it right, nay, is it not encouraging the Church in evil, to preach to her as we do, as in the way to heaven, when the fact is, she must repent to get there? Is the Church, as such, in a justified state? I wish not to cast bitter imputations; but if firstlove is the lowest standard of acceptance with God, and fitness for heaven, and that always grasps at entire obedience, to what other conclusion can we arrive? We are in error, when we think that we are Christians, while we have confessedly lost a measure of our first love.

The first law to which we allude, is that of separation, contained in the statute—"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing," etc. Now we contend that no such statute is based merely upon the arbitrary will of the Lawgiver; but each has a philosophy peculiarly its own. It would be easy to show the necessity for this law, in order to secure the progress of the gospel among men; but my purpose is not to defend the statutes of Heaven (even if they needed defense), but to show their practical recognition or repudiation in the life of the Church.

I intend, in this, to square my observations, not by any ideal of Christian excellence, which fancy may have formed, but "to the law and to the testimony." Here the question arises—in what does the Christian's "separation from the world" consist?

The obvious answer would be—in avoiding everything that would lead others to infer that we possess in any degree the spirit and principles of the world, and in the adoption of a gospel simplicity, which would evidence a taste for better things. We are to "come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing." To "come out" signifies to leave behind, to put a space between; which, of course, implies action, and a line of demarkation.

To come out, alludes to the act of leaving the world; to be separate, to the state of separation from it. "And touch not the unclean thing," is an admonitory caution against even proximity to it. The separation enjoined in act and in state, must be that of principle, or practice, or both. To be separate in principle and not in practice, is absurd, since "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh:" besides, principles not developed in practice soon die. So, to require separation in principle alone, would be to demand a contradiction of universal experience, and involve the destruction of the principle itself. Besides, it would leave God without a witness in the world, and overthrow the great design of Christian example.

If the requirement is to be separate in practice alone, and not in principle, it is equivalent to a Divine command for a church of hypocrites. We conclude, then, that the separation demanded of the Christian, is that of principle and practice together. The great principle of the world, self-gratification, in any of its forms, has no right in the Christian bosom. His principle is the glory of God!

Practice, then, as the result of such opposite principles, must, in the very nature of things, be ever divergent, receding further and further away from its opposite, and leaving the space set between continually enlarging, and the line of demarkation more and more distinct.

How different, alas! is the view which the Christian Church exhibits at the present time. The tendency seems to be, to reverse this course of procedure, and produce a close connection, if not affinity of feeling and example. But the demands of the gospel can never be satisfied with anything short of the separation above described. Either the Church does not understand its import, or she willfully disregards its authority.

In business, the morality of the change and the ware-room is the morality of the Church. In pleasure, the amusements of the world are, to a considerable extent, the amusements of Church members. In dress, the fashions of the world are the standard rules of the Church.\* In politics, the nameless tricks, and pretensions, and subterfuges of the wily demagogue, are too often the resort of those who profess better things.

But, without multiplying charges—some of which, perhaps, indicate tendencies more than actual verities—is not the fact utterly incontrovertible, that the line of demarkation between the Church and the world is almost wholly obliterated in practice. How many are there—nay, what a

<sup>\*</sup> Perhaps, however, the world has in some respects adopted the fashions of the Church, or at least consulted her taste, in its fashions. If so, the greater is the danger!

multitude is there who would never be known as professors except by their profession.

Who is a professor? "One who makes open declaration of his sentiments or opinions, particularly one who makes a public avowal of his belief in the Scriptures, and his faith in Christ." But what is faith in Christ? "An entire confidence or trust in God's character and declarations, and in the character and doctrines of Christ, with an unreserved surrender of the will to his guidance, and dependence on his merits for salvation."—Webster.

Now, with this before you, turn to the fifth sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew, and the thirteenth of first Corinthians, and form your ideal of what a Christian professor ought to be. Then, with that ideal distinctly before your mind, search for its living representatives in the professors around you, and then you will be prepared to admit the full force of the assertion, that there are multitudes who would only be known as professors by their profession—never by their lives!

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, etc., but honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of thine increase." How strangely does the profession of piety sound from those who, by every plan, and scheme, and effort, prove that they are contravening deliberately, and with purpose prepense, the high claims of this word of God! With thousands in their coffers—they safely lock up what they have, and compass sea and land for *more!* Professing to be heavenly-minded, they give the strongest evidence that this world is all their aim!

Professing to be the Lord's stewards, they arrogate to themselves the rights of sole and irresponsible proprietors. Professing to be pilgrims and strangers, they heap up their colossal piles of enduring marble, as if for a residence of ages. Professing to be of those who love their neighbors as themselves, they hide the bowels of their compassion from the suffering cause of God and humanity, and hoard the gains of a sinful selfishness, while God calls for the tithes and offerings that he may prove them therewith. It is true, all are not so. But our code of benevolence needs revising. We have the means to save the world, and we want the principles which will employ these means.

'A dereliction—an appalling dereliction—prevails all through Christendom in this respect. It has been the diaster of the world.... The middle ages excelled us altogether in this respect; property was then very generally consecrated to religion. The charities of those dark times were misdirected, and became a public evil; but they were right in their moral principle.... The Levitical dispensation was distinguished in a remark

able manner by the sanctification of property. The seal of religious charity was put upon almost every article of the Jew's possessions. He paid for the ransom of his first-born son; he paid for the first fruits of his flocks, and the first gatherings of his harvest, the latter being estimated at a sixtieth. He left in the corners of his fields, for the destitute, another sixtieth. Whatever dropped from his hand in reaping was left for the poor; and once in every seven years he allowed his lands to produce spontaneously for them. Then there were the sacrificed animals, or portions of themthe trespass-offerings, the sin-offerings, etc.; the expense of pilgrimages to the temple, thrice in the life of every male; the half-shekels for the sanctuary and the remission of all debts every seventh year. Besides these, there were numerous expenses for hospitality and reliefs to the poor; and then came the tithe—the tenth of the produce of the fields-for the Levites; and, finally, the remainder was assessed for another tenth, to be spent for the worship of the temple and for the poor; and then at the end of every third year, in order to secure the integrity of the law, the people made solemn declaration before God that this last tenth had been faithfully provided. It has been estimated that the devout Jew gave away about one third of all his income to the poor, and to religion."-Stevens, "Great Reform." Besides the

above, he states that the extra donations for the temple at Jerusalem have been estimated at "three thousand millions of dollars!"

Now if God demanded, or was pleased with such benevolence in those who only enjoyed a *local* and restricted system, what does He require of us who have a system designed to be universal?

Much of the so-called benevolence of the Church is utterly unworthy of the name. Instead of adopting the divine standard contained in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2,—"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches in Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come"—instead of this, convenience is the rule. "How much can I give and not feel it?" is the question, propounded together with each call of benevolence.

And it is answered with silver sixpences when it should be with golden dollars—and with golden dollars when it should be with double eagles! There is fearful guilt in the Church in this respect! We have means enough—with the spirit of primitive Christianity—to revolutionize the world, and plant the standard of the cross on every hill top of our benighted globe. May God give us the love!

<sup>&</sup>quot;Avoid the appearance of evil."

"Every evil appearance that is marked in us, is a kind of creation that is never to be annihilated; an evil demon sent out to seduce men to sin, and to curse them with its consequences. Our example may thus be doing the work of the devil, while we are saying our prayers." All example consists in appearances; and if that be wrong, men judge our motives to be wrong also. And when confirmed in this conviction, they transfer the blame of individual delinquency to the Church, and consequently disparage that. It is then easy to continue the fancied transmigration of evil, till at last, having passed from its original possessor through the Church, it becomes embodied in the system of Christianity itself. Thus are infidels made! And thus is the evil example of many operating as a wholesale manufactory of skeptics! Blot out all evil appearances from the lives of Christians, and you sign the death-warrant of infidelity! How important, then, to heed the caution, "Avoid the appearance of evil."

But do those who desecrate the Sabbath by reading political papers, and conversing upon kindred themes, heed it? Do those who mingle so eagerly in the strife for riches and honor regard it? Do those who are found in the theatre, ballroom, and pleasure circle remember it? Do those who adorn themselves so profusely with the trinkets and gaudy shows of earth, while God's cause

languishes for the means which they squander for foolish trifles, consider it? Do those who, for a filthy and disgusting habit, spend scores of dollars every year, weigh its meaning?

Do all avoid the *inconsistency of character* which is in itself the appearance and the essence of evil? Reader, how is your example? Is it going abroad as an angel of light, to cheer and save men; or as a fiend of darkness, to deceive and damn them?

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."—Matt. xvi. 24

The self-denial enjoined in the text is the point I wish to consider. I shall consider but a single evidence of the want of this principle in the Church, and select the one that is perhaps least thought of-the duty of fasting. That it is laid down in the Bible as a duty, and has been recognized by our fathers as such, cannot be denied, and it is a fact of deep significance, that in the whole range of religious biography, the most holy and useful persons have uniformally regarded it as a duty, and been most addicted to the practice. In the greatest work in which humanity has ever been engaged, fasting is the decisive power, which, as the auxiliary of prayer, ejects those spirits which "go not out except by prayer and fasting." If the Church understood the influence of the body upon

the mind, and could trace many of her spiritual declensions and obscurations to the real cause—an overfed, oppressed body—clogging the mind and blinding the perceptions;—or a stimulated system, demanding, at its proper intervals, nature's certain reaction; if she could be made to realize that many gloomy Christians might be made cheerful by the mere physical influence of a fast, setting aside its importance as a heaven-appointed means of grace, she would replace the old landmarks, and honor, as she ought, an institution of so much importance in the Christian life.

Not only does partial and imperfect obedience characterize a large portion of the Church, but the possession and culture of principles opposed to true piety are largely exhibited. Selfishness and pride, in all their varied forms, exert a commanding influence over the minds of a large portion of the Church.

The small amount contributed to benevolent purposes contrasted with the immense sums squandered upon useless or pernicious indulgencies, shows how extensive is the sway of selfishness. Covetousness, avarice, ease, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye and the pride of life trample many a springing bud of holiness to the earth, and, like the locust plague of Egypt, eat up every green thing, in thousands of souls redeemed.

Perhaps one of the most glaring developments of

these principles, and one which merits particular attention, not only for its own sake, but because others will not speak out in reference to it, is the love of display so observable in the Church. To even indicate the influence of this passion, in all its hydra exhibitions, would lead us too far from the brevity which we study in this connection; and yet we cannot allow it to pass without rebuke, and desolate as it does the fairest portion of our Zion, without uttering our sincere and solemn protestation against the unhallowed profanation.

And the worst of all is, it is so seductive that the Church seems insensible to her danger, and even the minstry caresses it, while it cajoles them with the thought that it is only an indication of the progressive emancipation of mind from the thraldom of antiquated puritanic notions and self-righteous Phariseeism. For a full expression of our views upon this topic, see Appendix.

The possession and culture of principles opposed to true piety is a conclusive evidence of the want of grace in the Church.

The developments of pride are numerous, and often unsuspected as to their real character. The love of dress and display; the undue deference to the opinions of others, which leads us to adopt forms of speech and modes of action foreign to our usages; the man-fearing spirit which imposes silence in reference to our religion in social circles,

and particularly the sentiment which ignores all physical manifestations in connection with religious experience—these are all the off-shoots of the one great principle—pride of heart. The last, by its arrogating to itself the right to direct the Spirit's operations, is peculiarly offensive. The great design in the gift of the Spirit is, to humble and purify men, and in the accomplishment of this work He takes the most effectual measures.

Often pride clings so closely to the so-called proprieties of religious demeanor, that the only way to loose its grasp is to trample upon the assumed proprieties themselves. The sentiment of which I speak declares this to be unnecessarystrongly insists that our God is a God of order not of confusion-and, in attempting to prescribe the modes in which the Spirit shall act, fetters its operations, and reaps, as the inevitable consequence, barrenness and drought. This has been so often exemplified in individual experience, that I hesitate not to mark it as a serious obstacle to the progress of the gospel! Order, indeed! What is order, if following the impulses of the Holy Spirit is not? Does God's Spirit need to be taught politeness by the cold, impassive frigidities of modern conventionalism? Is an amen or a hallelujah, or a smile or a tear, such an unpardonable violation of religious decorum that it must be banished from our sanctuaries forever? We may try the ostracism, but, remember, God's Spirit will go with the exiled expressions of his influence! While his work is that of God, he will work like a God, untrammeled by the notions of men! The history of the Church has a valuable lesson for us on this point.

In the great revival in Virginia, in 1770 and 1775 an attempt was made to repress physical manifestations, and the result, as recorded by the Rev. Mr. Jarratt, is in this brief but suggestive sentence "But as this abated, the work of conviction and conversion usually abated too."—Bangs' History M. E. Ch., Vol. 1, p. 100.

President Edwards observes of such experience during the great awakening in 1742, "That whereever these most appear there is always the greatest and the deepest work."—Ibid., p. 99.

Another writer, concerning the work in Virginia, says:—"When the greatest work was, when the greatest number of souls have been convinced and converted to God, then have been the most outcries, tremblings, convulsions, and all sorts of external signs."—Ibid., p. 104.

It is a difficult matter, properly to discriminate between the genuine effects of the Spirit's influence and those simulated acts which, I doubt not, the enemy of all good sometimes produces, in order to bring the word of God into disrepute.

And while we ought not, on the one hand, to en-

courage the extravagances of the constitutionally susceptible and the evil influenced; we should be equally guarded on the other, lest, in our zeal to steady the ark of the covenant, we transgress against the laws of Heaven. There is little doubt but that the attempt to lace all religious emotions in the straight jacket of "social propriety," is most injurious to true religion.

## THE MAN PLEASING SPIRIT.

The neglect of discipline is perhaps as strong an evidence of the existence of this spirit as we need to point. The fear of offending keeps us from particularly insisting upon the total renunciation of every sin in members, hence the little discrepancies in their theory or life pass on, gaining strength, until they stand out open deformities, or as moral obliquities of such questionable character as to practically nullify their Christian influence! But why should we offend by insisting upon so reasonable a service?

The Church does not believe that we expect them to live as we preach, or as the discipline requires. Hence each one establishes his own rule to suit himself, and never thinks of disciplinary rules as obligatory, or of disciplinary authority as binding, except in the grosser and more glaring violations, which affect social character. We never shall have a holy Church until we possess a consistent book of

discipline, or, if we have that now, until we live consistently with respect to it!

## VIOLATION OF COVENANT VOWS.

The readiness with which covenant vows are violated, whatever may be their character, is absolutely astonishing. The baptismal vow, the vow of class connection and church fellowship, the vows extorted by sickness and trial, or evoked by gratitude, all are alike heedlessly passed by, like the breath which uttered them, as a thing of naught!

But is there no error here!

Does God regard our vows as such trifling things? Do we, when we make them, consider them of so little consequence? Nay, the earnestness of soul-feeling is in them; alas! that it should ever drivel away to such perilous results.

"Vow and pay unto the Lord your God" is the direction of Scripture. It is solemn trifling with one's self, thus to forget his vows!

Setting aside all spiritual considerations, its mental consequence, when often repeated, is disastrous in the extreme. He who habitually violates his vows to God, soon loses his self-respect and confidence in the power of his own resolutions, so that subsequent promises will be made with so much doubtfulness as to be not half sincere. Besides, he who can habitually lie to God, will most certainly

be at least somewhat careless of the truth with reference to his fellow-men.

It is sowing seed that will produce an abundant harvest, but it will be a gleaning of remorseful sighs. "Offer unto God thanksgiving and pay thy vows unto the Most High!"

We come now to a question of vast importance to a proper view of this subject.

What is the moral influence of the Church? The moral power of any Church is in proportion to its purity and aggressive spirit. But let us be more definite.

The moral influence of any association is twofold: internal, upon the individuals comprising it, and external upon others.

1st. What is her influence upon her own members?

2d. Upon the world?

There can be no doubt but that she should possess such a conserving moral influence upon her own members, as to a great degree to mould their characters, and shape their destinies. But how is it? Are not the characters and destinies of the younger portion of the Church, especially, more under the forming power of external and worldly influences than of those which grow out of their relation with the Church of Christ? Here is matter of deep humiliation before God! The Church

seems to throw upon each individual the sole responsibility of his own faithfulness, or otherwise, and consider herself an institution, the privileges of which each may enjoy or not as he may prefer; and thus she practically regards each accession as a prefix to herself, rather than an integral part of herself, to be watched over, and provided for with tender solicitude, as a member, which, if allowed to suffer, must involve the whole body in the same.

The idea of "bearing each other's burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ," of watching over each other with godly jealousy, lest any should be. led astray, of praying for one another, etc., seems to be banished from the Church as a prominent characteristic of her conduct. Noble exceptions there are, and not a few in number, but it is leading traits that I seek, and must confess that my heart is sorely pained with the absence of one so desirable. The basis of this influence is sympathy. And it is a common complaint with members of our Church, that there is not the love one for another, and the active interest in each other's welfare that once characterized their intercourse. How, then, can there be such an influence as ought to exist, when its fountain is measurably obstructed?

As numerous as Christians are, they should claim the right to direct public sentiment in reference to all moral questions, and should hold the balance of power in all political affairs. We'are aware that the last part of this proposition will meet but little favor from many, who regard religion as too sacred to carry to the polls, and its principles too pure to be found in the caucus, at the ballot-box, or in the legislative hall.

But why, if righteousness exalteth a nation, should its voice not be heard in her councils and at her political gatherings? To us it seems the basest treachery to our highest civil interests, to thus commit their keeping to the profane and un-. principled. But to this it may be objected-Christians vote, they mingle in all the deliberative assemblages, participate in all the struggles of the political campaign, and enjoy equally with others the honors and emoluments of office. True, they do; but do they do so in their distinctive character as Christians, or only as members of a party? The truth is, party lines are so distinct, and party tyranny is so despotic, that few ever think of opposing conscientious scruples to the claims of a party nominee for office. This is all wrong! We would not have a Christian party as such, but we would have every Christian stand upon his independent rights, and utterly refuse to support any man whose character is not pure, and whose principles are not correct! In this way alone can our institutions be perpetuated. They are grounded in Christianity; they have been built up beneath its fostering influence, and nothing but its guiding hand can save us from the toils that surround us. It is time that the Church was awake to her rights—no, not merely her rights—her duty to freedom, to religion, and to posterity.

Public sentiment, too, should be formed by her. All the great moral questions, which so frequently agitate the public mind, should no longer be settled, as many have been, by social precedent or political expediency, but by the unerring promptings of an intelligent and enlightened piety.

Does the Church actually possess the power which thus, by "divine right," belongs to her? We fear not; and the fact that she does not, proves how feeble, compared with what it should be, is her influence upon the social interests. She has done much—very much; but so much remains for her to do, that we lose sight of the ground gained, in the boundless expanse yet to be secured.

Having thus considered the present state of the Church, it may be well to add here a brief summary of our conclusions. We have found serious defects almost everywhere. As an organization, she makes no adequate provision for her children; her various parts do not work harmoniously. Her material interests are grand—stupendous, even—yet not what they should be. Her educational interests are far-reaching and powerful, but need more of the sanctifying element of the Holy Spirit.

Her spiritual interests languish; her doctrinal purity has been encroached upon; her practical purity, as a body, is but a name. Her faith is weak, else would she have larger accessions to her pale. Her love lacks fervency, else it would thaw out the frozen fountains of benevolence, and melt the soul in intense pity for the lost. Her obedience is imperfect, and selective in its objects, obeying only those commands which she chooses to; and she is possessed of many principles opposed to true piety. The consequence of all this is, her moral influence is feeble upon her own members, and upon the world, in political affairs, and the formation of public sentiment.

Yet we would not draw conclusions from these facts adverse to a cheering view of future prospects. There is much to encourage; the benevolent enterprises of the day are full of promise; the general concern in relation to duty, as the stewards of God's temporal mercies, augurs well for the future beneficence of the Church. If, in the relaxation from the rigidity of earlier discipline, we have gone too far toward the opposite extreme may we not hope that the sober second thought of the Church, especially when brought to bear upon the tendencies within her, will repress these tendencies, and set all right in the end. At least, we have great reason to be thankful, that although there is so much to condemn, yet our merciful

Father has not forgotten to be gracious. He has carefully nourished the good, and endeavored to remove the evil. Let us do likewise, and a brighter day will soon dawn upon our Zion.

In relation to the growing interest in matters of benevolence, I insert a slip cut from the New York Journal of Commerce:

## "SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE.

"Another association has recently been formed in Philadelphia, under the broad name of the 'American Systematic Beneficence Society,' the object of which is, 'to promote, through the press and otherwise, the adoption of the scriptural principle of systematic contribution to religious and benevolent purposes.' The officers of the society include some of the most wealthy and influential persons in the city of Philadelphia, and are distributed among the clergy and laity of every evangelical denomination. It has been received with great favor, the conviction being universal, that something more must be done by the Church for the conversion of the world, and that this is the time to do it.

"The first public meeting of the society was held in Philadelphia a few weeks since, which was of the most interesting character. A very large assemblage of our best, most philanthropic, and most intelligent citizens were present, and all seemed deeply impressed with the importance of the subject brought before them. It is understood that this society will republish the volume entitled 'Gold and the Gospel,' and take measures to have it sent to every minister in the land. The meeting was, in all respects, a most interesting one, and no doubt a substantial beginning was made for a movement which will be of the utmost benefit in this country, as the similar movement has in England and Ireland."

Now, what but the special influences of the

Spirit—the gift of power—can enable us to meet the emergencies that with such dark and frowning vision gather about us? What but this can awake the tender sympathy and the loving care for souls, which is needed to entwine the affections of the Church around her youthful charge, and train them for the altar and for heaven?

What but this can soften down the asperities of nature, and cause the complicated machinery of the partially sanctified Church to move harmoniously? What but this can evoke the self-denial and forbearance, without which our itinerancy becomes an intolerable burden, and our Episcopacy an un bearable tyranny?

What but this can melt the cold, frozen fountains of Christian benevolence, and cause them to send forth their needed tribute to regenerate the world?

What but this can go down deep into the petrified aspirations of the soul, and, lifting them from the embrace of the Mammon god, present them, all disenthralled and sanctified, cheerful offerings upon the shrine of Christian gratitude?

What but this can wrest from the hand of the skeptical and the reckless, the moulding educational power which is still retained, and render it subservient to the gospel?

What but this can invest the great central doctrine of the gospel—Christian holiness—with its

own beauty, and write upon all the realities of life Holiness to the Lord?

Can anything but this teach man his own true power, and how he may use that power to claim the blessings that he needs? In other words—Can any other principle ever give him the faith in self, without which he can have but little faith in God? Can anything else inspire him with the confidence in God which will enable him to reckon every promise as an unfailing foundation of hope for him forever? Can anything else inspire him with the love which—contemplating the great statement, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc.,—regards every minor enactment as equally authoritative, and with unquestioning obedience delights to nail every power, and affection, and susceptibility, to the cross of Christ?

What but this can teach the Church that she is to live for God and humanity, not self, and that her duty is only done, when she, like her Lord, does all she can to win the world to Christ?

And especially that God expects her to claim, for his service, those whom his Providence places beneath her moulding hand in the Sabbath School.

What but this can expel from the heart all those principles which are now exhibited in the partial obedience of the Church, and cause her to stand out blameless, "undefiled and separate from sinners, and without spot or wrinkle or any such thing?"

What but this can give her the moral influence which shall stand at the helm of humanity's interests, and guide the ark of the world's hope in the channel of safety and peace?

What but this can bind the strong man armed—who has hung out his ensigns, as the ambassador for the court of darkness, upon the human temple—tear down his flaunting standard, rip off his gaudy regalia, and with a meek and quiet spirit adorn God's handiwork, in the beautiful simplicity which He loves?

The Church that has no converts is a dying Church! And what but this can fix the untaught expectations of the membership upon the constant revival which is so much needed to replenish our losses? In short, what but this gift of power—this essential qualification for our work—this Divine Auxiliary in our efforts—what but this can enable us to fill our station—discharge our obligations and stand unrebuked at the last?

The "powerless Christian" ought to be felt to be as great a misnomer as the forceless thunderbolt.

2d. Her actual achievements, compared with her possible triumphs: and the last regarded as the standard of duty.

It will be seen, at once, that the whole of the force of this argument hinges upon the assumption, that capacity and opportunity are the measure of

duty. But a point so vital as this needs some confirmation. It may be proved by the absurdity of any supposable opposite—by Reason, the testimony of conscience, and by the Scriptures. The last species of evidence is so clear and irrefragable, that it needs but little comment.

The Scriptures most emphatically assert, that "whose knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin:" and we shall see that this assertion is founded not only in the Divine right to announce his own laws, but in the essential reason of things. That all man's natural faculties are given him to be exercised, is an axiom which none but a fool or a madman will deny. The fact of duty, as involved in some sense in the possession of faculties, none will question. But how far does that duty extend, and what are its limitations? If the existence of a given natural faculty imposes upon its possessor the obligation to exercise it, within the sphere prescribed by the Creator, then it is plain, that the perfections of the Divine character forbid the supposition that the faculty could exceed the duty; because that would imply a redundancy of capacity for no adequate purpose; or, in other words, it would assume the creation of a function or faculty for no end: which would be obviously inconsistent with the attributes of Deity! as well as utterly at war with all the dictates of experience. Besides, as we have before said, relation is the foundation of

obligation, and consequently, wherever relation is seen, obligation must be supposed. Further, obligation recognized and honored is the only source of happiness! Is it, then, reasonable to suppose, that God would give us a faculty, or what amounts to the same thing in the argument—a redundancy of any capacity involving relations, and obligations to the full extent of its own existence, and as the only source of true happiness—and yet leave us free from duty to exercise this capacity?

Again—is it not a fact in almost every person's experience, that conscience condemns him nearly or quite as much for what he might have done, but has failed to do, as for the positive crimes of which he has been guilty?

In conclusion—if this is not the standard of duty, what is? Not the judgment; for that is as variable as the educational influences to which it is subject. Not the conscience; for that is governed by the belief. Not the belief; for that is often an hereditary gift, founded only upon traditional fables! The truth is, any and every other standard of duty than this, is a court of appeals, whose decisions are as variable as can be imagined, and whose very changefulness virtually abrogates all duty! The argument has thus been stated, in view of the question purely as abstract; but in giving it a relative application, other things may modify it in some of its aspects. Thus we are to

view man now, not as God made him, as the image of Himself, or the miniature representative of his attributes, but as fallen, and hence needing the interposition of a law, which before was necessarily presupposed. Viewing man as unfallen, the development of all his faculties to their utmost extent would not endanger the harmony of his nature, nor disturb the mutual balance of his powers: on the contrary, as a whole it would increase the harmony in the aggregate, by an exact enlargement of his individual capabilities.

But, with man fallen, the case is changed; discord already reigns; the nice adjustment of faculties and powers is already lost; and hence, to promulge the doctrine that it is his duty to exercise every faculty of his nature, as it is, to its utmost extent, is only to increase the disturbing forces of his being, and make him more fallen and more helpless than before. Interposing now the reconstructive power of redemption, and adding a modifying clause, we restate the proposition, as applicable to each and every man.

The utmost exercise of every faculty, within its appropriate sphere, is always duty! Granting this in reference to the individual, how is it with the Church? We answer—the whole duty of any member of the Church is a part of the duty of the Church! More—any duty of a member is a part of the duty of the Church; and further, it is

just that particular part of her duty which is represented by the individual duty, as a unit of the great whole!

It follows, then, that the same standard of duty obtains to the Church as a whole, as to the individual as a part, and that whatever is in her path to be done, and that she can do, is her appropriate work! however much it may conflict with preconceived notions, or old and honored prejudices.

We are now prepared to consider the actual achievements of the Church, and, by comparing them with her possible triumphs, we can then estimate the degree of her faithfulness. It is not for us here to define what she has accomplished, with the exactitude of weight and measure, but in general terms to approximate as nearly to the truth as circumstances will permit. What she has done for individuals, has already been sufficiently indicated in our remarks upon the present state of the Church. What she has done for her own nation socially and politically, and what she has done for the world, remains to be considered! That she may possess a conserving moral influence sufficient for any emergency, cannot be controverted without seriously questioning the wisdom of Him who has placed his reliance upon her to redeem the race of man. Yet, in the face of the fact that He has chosen her instrumentally to accomplish his purposes of mercy toward the the world, what does her history teach us but that she has been most neglectful of her trust? And if the mere fact of imperiling the interests of eternity were sin enough, in the absence of all other transgression, to damn a soul, how fearful must be her guilt, in the exposure to which she has subjected herself!

Yet I would not pronounce her wholly reprobate, nor indulge in too sweeping imputations: I blame not in anger, but in pity and in hope. Whatever our social blessings are, above those of the world at large, is her doing. Whatever are our political immunities, she gave them birth, and has nourished and watched over them with a mother's care! Whatever are our national position and influence, she has secured, and is their only safeguard.

Yet, had she done what she might, the monstrous social evils under which we now groan might have been greatly limited, if not exterminated! The political chicanery, intrigue, and corruption, so rife in our legislative, and not excluded even from our judicial departments, might have received their death-blow, or even been strangled in the birth. Our influence upon the world should now be felt in the darkest recesses of earth's caverned tribes, and the world should ere this have been taught that the name American is

the symbol for all that is noble, and good, and divine in the human race. How far short of this we come, is left for each to decide for himself. I will only add a statement taken from the New York Observer, showing the state of affairs in the great emporium of our land. But we cannot repress the inquiry—if she has been thus negligent of home interests, what must be the degree of her faithfulness to the world?

## CHURCHES IN NEW YORK

IN 1834, AND IN 1854.

"If the facts of the past, as compared with those of the present, are to be regarded as forming, in an important sense, the basis of our hopes for the future, the friends of Christ in this great city cannot think lightly of such ecclesiastical statistics as were presented in a previous article. The growth of the principal evangelical churches during the last twenty years was then set forth. The increase of each, as related to that of the population, was also separately considered. But, in order to a comprehensive and truthful view of the religious condition of New York, it will be necessary to compare the combined results with the whole number of inhabitants. And, in doing this, it will be convenient to have a tabular view of some of the statistics that have already appeared in detail.

"This table will show the number of churches of each denomination in 1834 and 1854; the number of communicants; the whole number added by profession of their faith in each year; the average addition to each church; the average number of communicants in each church for those years, and how many inhabitants there were in those years to one communicant in each of

these evangelical denominations. This last item will be expressed under a fractional form.

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	Churches.	Communi- cants.	Added by profession.	Av. addi'n.	Aver. communicants.	Population to one com- municant.	
Baptist	15	3,476	220	14	231	1 in 71	
Congregational Dutch Reformed Lutheran	13	3,492	133	10	268	1 in 71	
Methodist Episcopal	11	5,118	}		464	1 in 48	
Presbyterian	35	11,381	913	26	325	1 in 21	
Protestant Episcopal	24	3,839	399	16	159	1 in 65	
Total	101	27,306	1,665	19	289	1 in 9	

1854.

	Churches.	Communi.	Added by profession.	Av. addi'n.	Aver. com- municants.	Population to one com- municant.
Raptist	29 8 23 5 35 48 48	8,383 1,050 4,866 3,048 8,452 13,947 8,160	302 24 237 227 1,000 681 888	10 3 10 45 28 14 18	289 131 211 609 241 290 170	1 in 77 1 in 619 1 in 133 1 in 213 1 in 76 1 in 46 1 in 79
Total	196	47,906	3,359	17	243	1 in 13

"In further explanation of the above table, it may be well to add that, instead of the number of communicants actually received to the Methodist Episcopal and the Protestant Episcopal churches in the years under review, the number of probationers received for the former, and the number confirmed in the latter have been recorded. Moreover, the reader should be informed that, in giving the average additions to the separate churches, no account was made of fractions, which will explain the slight discrepancies between these and the combined averages. It will

not be amiss, also, to remind him, that the estimated population for 1834 was 250,000 souls, and for 1854, 650,000.

"Thus, by the above table, it will be seen that the largest relative increase of churches has been with the Methodists, they having more than treble the number that they had twenty years ago. It will also be observed that the greatest increase of communicants has been with the Baptists-their number having been more than doubled in twenty years. But when it is considered that the churches of the Episcopalians have increased two-fold, that their communicants have more than doubled, and that there has been an increase in the average of confirmations and of communicants. it seems as if they might claim to have as much ground for complacence—or, more properly, as little for displacence—in their affairs, as any of their non-prelatic brethren. It will also be seen that while each of these denominations has increased, and two or three quite rapidly, not one has kept pace with the growth of the population. The above table also reveals the fact, that the Presbyterians have manifested the least power of self-expansion—their relative strength, as computed by their membership, having diminished more than one-half in twenty years. And it also appears, by the same rules, that the Baptists have been most successful in maintaining their former relative position, their loss being the difference between 1-71 and 1-77, or a loss of one communicant to every 899 of the population. Omitting other observations that might be made on the above details, the remainder of this article must be devoted to a comparative view of the results obtained, in their relation to the advancement of Christ's kingdom in this city. And first of all. it will be seen that while there has been an aggregate increase of ninety-five churches belonging to these denominations, the relative loss has been very large. For, if they had retained their relative numerical strength in this particular, there would now be 262 churches, instead of 196—thus showing a relative loss equivalent to sixty-six churches. Or, to set forth this deficiency in another form: Whereas, in 1834, these denominations had.

collectively, one church to every 2,475 of the population, they now have one to every 3,316 souls.

"Moreover, if the number of communicants belonging to these churches in 1834, as compared with the whole population, had been relatively the same in 1854, there would have been an aggregate of about 72,000, instead of about 48,000, as per table; showing here, too, a relative loss of 24,000 church members.

"But if every church, having in 1854 no more than 150 communicants, be ranked as feeble, then must one-third of the 196 churches be placed in that category. Supposing, however, that the whole 196 are capable of seating, on an average, 1,000 persons—which is quite too large an estimate—it will be seen that these denominations, collectively, cannot accommodate so many of a population of 275,000 souls as ought to be regular attendants on public worship. And, if the few other churches in the city, not mentioned above, which give prominence to the fundamental truths of the gospel, be included in this general estimate, it will still appear that there are only accommodations for so many of 300.000 souls as ought every Sabbath to worship God publicly, leaving more than one-half the population destitute of a preached But, in order to approximate completeness, it may not be amiss to look at this matter in one other aspect. Hitherto no account has been made of the Jews, who reject Christ and his gospel: nor of the Roman Catholics, who have smothered that gospel by mountains of traditions and idolatrous rites; nor of the Unitarians, who have such exalted views of human excellence that they feel no need of an atoning and justifying Saviour; nor of the Universalists, who are so firmly persuaded of the abounding mercy of God, as to believe that he is determined to save all men from eternal perdition, even though they spend their mortal lives in blaspheming the name of Christ, notwithstanding it has been declared that 'there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'

"If the edifices of these, and all others reported in the directory, be reckoned as churches, we shall have a total of about

270 in this city for the year 1854. And if every such edifice be regarded as capacious enough to accommodate 1,000 persons, the painful fact will still remain, that at least there are 200,000 of our neighbors and fellow-probationers for eternity, who are unfurnished with accommodations for public worship. Nor would the evil be at all alleviated, should we be told that the majority of these are ignorant Romanists, Materialists, Pantheists, and Infidels, who are mostly abandoning themselves to the gratification of their depraved passions. It would still remain true that they are perishing sinners, for whom the gospel is the only remedy. True, also, would it still be, that they are an important element of our population, and are giving character to the widely-felt influence of this great city. How and when shall Christ's gospel be preached to these hundreds of thousands of dying sinners? How and when shall the influence of this city upon the country and the world become truly Christian and salutary?"

Passing over the organization of the Church and her inharmonious working, all which might be remedied, we notice her material interests. Vast as they are, that they might have been far greater will admit of no question. Had all Christians been faithful, as they might, the great majority of the adult population might to-day have been comprised in the membership of the various denominations.

Thus, instead of the aggregate we now claim, we might have controlled the wealth of the land. And had the true Bible idea of benevolence possessed the Church, the available wealth would have been nearly equal to the possessions of the Church, whereas, now, not a tithe of her accumulations is

held at the service of religion. Supposing that our congregations now were educated to the idea of Bible-benevolence, viz.: one-third of the income, our yearly contributions would now be \$126,650,853.

Her educational interests, too, wide spread and far reaching as they are, are small compared with what might have been.

Not merely in increased extent, however, would the benefit be found, but in their greater purity! Much of the education by schools and the press, which is now directly under her control, is nevertheless not pure in its tendency.

A materialistic philosophy and a reckless speculation pervade, far too much, many of the textbooks of our schools, and the principles of our presses. It is only when the Bible shall have incontrovertibly proved its divinity—not only in the lives of its adherents, but in the general triumph of its principles—that the waywardness of intellect shall submit to the leadings of an unquestioning faith, and the admissions of the understanding bring the unreluctant homage of the heart!

But it is in her spiritual interests that we find the greatest deficiency. When we consider the doctrine of holiness in its nature and benefits, it is surprising that it has secured no firmer hold upon the affections of Christians. A doctrine which contains the very marrow of gospel provisions, and is in itself the complete embodiment of all that is purifying and desirable in the religion of Christ, it would seem, would win its admirers wherever proclaimed. But alas! how different the result. Like its practical exponent—the Lord Jesus—it is a fugitive and a stranger in the earth, and, while seeking the lost and the deprayed, to purify and restore, scoffed and derided! While pointing to a heaven of glorious holiness, hurled to a grave of disgraceful forgetfulness; and, while going about doing good, scandalously gibbeted, by heated disputants, and hooted and speared by sin-loving professors.

How different might the facts have been! We can conceive it very possible that the majority, at least, of all professors should reverence the sacred name, and bow obediently to its every behest, and sacrifice at its shrine every unhallowed affection and impure desire. But it is not so. And if there is one sin of greater magnitude than any other that now curses our Zion, it is this repudiation of the vitality of Christ's salvation! The Saviour shows how the Church is to be prospered: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil." "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

Not only is such repudiation spiritual suicide in view of this fact, but it is to labor for a curse, and toil for sorrow. To grieve the Holy Spirit, is the greatest possible sin! It is a deliberate summing up of all actual sins, and confirmation of them in the single rejection of their remedy.

It is cumulative; ever augmenting—never diminishing! O Christian, dream no more of heaven, if thy life is stained by this, till, with tears and entreaties, you call back the departed influences which once you spurned, but which are now your life-

plank and your only hope.

No wonder then that faith is not stronger. How can our faith be strong, while we ignore the heavenestablished means for its existence and vigorous activity? A holy life, springing from a holy principle, is an essential condition to the exercise of the higher degrees of Christian faith. O, what a transforming power is needed in the Church of Christ! A power which shall bend the will to the accomplishment of all the possibilities of a sublime faith in God, worthy of his promises and our wants. We cannot tell how much faith might be possessed, nor what results it would achieve. Moses prayed and 3,000,000 godless idolaters were spared. Ex. xxii. 11-Joshua prayed and "the sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon over the vale Ajalon." Solomon prayed and the Lord promised "and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice. If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence to devour my people, if my people which

are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attent unto the prayer that is made in this place." 2 Chron. vii. 12-15. Elijah prayed, and the fire descended from heaven and consumed the sacrifice. 1 Kings xviii. "Prayer is powerful—mighty," said one; "next to Almighty," said another!

Let us look now at efficiency.

We here subjoin a tabular statement of the increase of the Methodist Church at different periods—part of which is estimated from the best data in possession, and the remainder taken from Church statistics.

From the time Embury began to preach in New York in 1766, to the fall of 1769, equal to about three years, three preachers had collected probably about two hundred members. Two years after, in 1771, they had increased to six preachers and six hundred members, and in the June of 1773 to ten preachers and 1160 members.

Allowing 1 preacher and 175 members increase for 1769, and 2 " 225 " " " 1770, and 2 " 240 " " " 1771, and 2 " 320 " "

" 1772, we reach the following results:

Pime.	Min.		Min.	Min.		Mem.	Mem.		em.
1769	3	secured	1	1 1	secured	58	10	secured	9
1770	4	66	2	1	46	56	10	66	6
1771	6	66	2	1	66	40	10	"	4
1772	1 8	66	2	1 1	44	40	10	66	4

Averaging for each of the four years 48½ members secured by each preacher, and 5¾ members secured by each ten members.

In 1854, for the same work, it took six ministers and nearly 160 members; showing that the ministry has but one-sixth the success, and the membership one-sixteenth the success that they had then.

The above is estimated as correctly as we were able—the following is strictly accurate. It is based, however, not upon the number actually converted in the respective periods, but upon the increase of the Church. In 1854 probably some 20,000 died, and hence their places must be supplied before there could be any increase. But for a comparative table it is accurate, because the same ratio has probably always died.

Time.	Min.		Min.	Min.		Mem.	Mem.		Mem.
1773	10	secured	7	1	secured	91	10	secured	8
1778	10	"	7	1	66	86	10	66	4.
1790	20	"	3	1	66	82	20	44	7
1800	20	66	1	1	44	27	20	66	2
1820	40	66	3	1	66	24	40	46	3
1840	80	- 66	9	1	66	34	80	46	12
1854	80	66	6	1	66	6	80	66	3

In 1773 or '78, the 80 ministers occupied in 1854 in securing 6 preachers would have secured

56—more than nine times as many. And one preacher then (1773) secured as many members as 13 do now. And the 80 members which it took in 1854 to secure 3 members, would have secured 64 then—more than 21 times as many!

Thus the ministry of those days was more than nine times as efficient in securing co-laborers as we are now; about thirteen times as successful in winning souls as we are. And the membership was more than twenty-one times as efficient then than now. Showing almost double the decline of efficiency in membership that there is in the ministry, terrible as it is with them. Had the M. E. Church now the efficiency that she had then, the addition to our ministry would have been, in 1854, 3,131, instead of 340; and the increase of membership 407,134, instead of 27,442. I know a multitude of suggestions will be made to account for this delinquency, and justify ourselves; but until our theory of Church responsibility and duty is overthrown, we cannot admit them to be of any weight. The only one which we deem worthy of notice is—the greater number of professors\*

<sup>\*</sup> The more the Church numbers, the greater ought to be the ratio of its increase, because more numerous assaults will be made upon each separate point of attack. Illustrated by a village of 300 inhabitants:—If 100 are professors, then each Christian has two to persuade; while if 200 are professors, each unconverted person has two to persuade him.

now, in proportion to the population; but as long as four-fifths of the population over ten years of age remain unconverted, we cannot deem that a sufficient justification, especially when we consider the facilities for extension now, compared with their absence then, made more embarrassing by the circumstances of their position, amid all the demoralizing influences of a desolating war. A complete and perfect organization is a very essential assistant in the work of evangelism. We now have that to a far greater degree than they had then. We have all the material resources, and social influence, which we can desire—all which they lacked. Our Book, Tract, Sunday School, Bible, and Missionary Causes are all either exclusively ours, or have been much developed since their day. The influence of organization and system is seen in the rapid comparative increase of efficiency immediately after the first conference, in 1773, as will be seen by comparing the success in 1772 and 1773—the years before and after this conference; showing a marked increase in the ministry in securing co-workers, more than double; in securing accessions to the Church, more than double; and of the membership in securing additions, just double. And all this the first year of the working of the organization.

What might have been done had the Church been faithful, may be indicated by what has been

done since 1800, with all the unfaithfulness that has cramped her energies. 340,000 is a large estimate for the Christians of all evangelical denominations in 1800, of a population of 5,305,925, or one member to every sixteen of population. Now there are upwards of 3,000,000, or one in every seven of population.

It is true it has taken fifty-five years to do this, but it has been amid reverses of every character, and, above all, in spite of the tendencies to decay which exist in the unsanctified affections and unhallowed desires of the Church itself. O. what might not those 340,000 Christians have done had they all been faithful, and had every accession been faithful, also?

Christian life is a thing of power. The more of the elements of that life that exist in a given case, the greater will be its effects. These elements are developed by culture. Apply these facts to those referred to, and, estimating for the increase of power by culture and by multiplication, the arithmetic of principles will be found far to exceed the developments of experience. But upon which shall we rely as indicative of what we may expect in the future?

The principles, certainly. Religion is an exact science. We may estimate by the most rigid rules of its principles, and it will not disappoint our expectations. We are too prone to judge of the possible, in spiritual things, by the actual; of what can be, by what is, or has been! Defective as is this mode of reasoning, we may apply it in this connection with astounding results. The Moravians, though numbering less than 20,000 in Europe and America, have gathered more than 70,000 into their congregations in foreign lands. They have 70 missionary stations, and 286 missionaries, all sustained for about \$60,000, averaging \$857½ per station; being 3½ persons to each member, and one missionary to every 70 members.

We had, in 1854, 783,358 members, and supported in the foreign and domestic fields 700 missionaries, and had congregations of, probably, 250,000; being one missionary to every 1,119 members, and one person in the congregations to every 3 members.

Thus, if we were as successful as they, we should have 11,190 missionaries, and in our missionary congregations 2,741,753 persons!

Why this immense disparity? Is it accounted for by the fact of our home extension?

If we admit the Divine origin of the gospel, we cannot doubt its power to do as much for us as for them!

Even at the rate that Methodism increased in 1770—and that was far from what might have been—present Christians could nominally Christianize the world in a little over four years, and convert it in a little over seven.

Sixty years ago, the members of the M. E. Church were to the population, as 1 in 60. In 1848, 1 in 20.

So that, with all her defects, in common with other branches of the Church of Christ, great and glorious have been her successes. We would not blot a single line that records the triumph of her efforts, nor blast a single leaf that is woven in the chaplet of her fame. No, no, we would thankfully respond to all; but to us, there seems little time for gratulation, while every turn of this rolling ball hurls thousands, unprepared, to their final doom. No! On, on, is our cry, and rest not, stop not, flinch not, till the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

We have already seen that the requirement concerning love, and the measure of that requirement are both plainly declared:—" Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself."

Now, this is designed to define the obligation of all mankind, or some favored few! If it is to be restricted to the few, then we should naturally expect to find the limitation plainly revealed. But when, instead of an express limitation, we find it given as the universal law of obedience, we are compelled to the conclusion, that the obligation rests upon all.

Now, if the obligation applies to all, the ability

is certainly implied, as obligation without ability is absurd. We conclude, then, that it is quite possible for all Christians to love the Lord with all their hearts, and their neighbors as themselves.

Now, what would be the effect of such love upon the benevolence of the Church? Instead of the \$2,450,650, now contributed, at least 1 per cent. of the interest of our possessions would be devoted to God. Thus, \$63,225,412 would stand in the place of present contributions, and go out to redeem and bless mankind. Supposing our congregations to be taught the Bible idea of benevolence, instead of the \$2,450,650 now contributed, we should have every year \$126,650,853; and if, for every \$18 expended, we might reckon upon one soul to be saved, it would give us in a single year, 7,036,158 souls, and both the contributions and souls augmenting every year! Such estimates show, at one glance, how easily the world might be converted, if we could once enlist the present energies of Christianity for it. Then, what melting sympathy for souls would possess the Church! A yearning pity would impel her to such acts of heroic selfdenial and labor for the lost, as would astound the world, and throw the age of martyrs in the shade. Heaven speed the day!

We want a fire within which shall burn with quenchless flames of effort for the salvation of the race! How soon might the incomplete obedience of the Church, which is now her scandal and her curse, be changed, by such a love as before indicated, to the most filial subjection of heart, and undeviating rectitude of conduct. And if the line of demarkation between the Church and the world were as distinctly marked as in apostolic days, how soon would the world yield to the power of such open-hearted Christianity as this.

What the world needs now, is frank, open-hearted but determined principle. O! if the Church were separate, the millennial morn would soon dawn upon the hopes of the long-suffering world. It is the graces of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance," which give power to Christian example, and which, indeed, make it; and, when attended with a full measure of the Spirit, render it free from the inconsistencies which paralyze so much example.

The existence of such love would expel all the unhallowed troop of principles which now so successfully oppose true piety. Pride could never exalt its head where such deep humility, as such love implies, is found. So of all the other impure principles and roots of bitterness, from which spring all the weakness, inefficiency, and inconsistency of the Church.

Her influence would then be far-reaching and powerful. She would watch with jealous care

over every member, and throw around each soul redeemed the preserving power of her own purity. How few backslidings would then occur. In political affairs and in the formation of public sentiment, her influence would be paramount and sanctifying. Its benefits would be most beneficial upon ministerial supply—removing many of the unnecessary difficulties connected with the calling, and enhancing its privileges.

The Presbyterian Herald says, in 1852:—"There are, at the West, 291 O. S. Presbyterian Churches which have neither pastor nor stated supplies."

A correspondent of the Central Christian Herald, in 1853, in speaking of the want of ministers in the New School Presbyterian Church, remarks that, "In Ohio there are 128 pastors and stated supplies, and 232 churches. In our four Synods, 102 pastors and stated supplies, and 225 churches. In the Synod of Ohio, 35 pastors and stated supplies, and 73 churches. In the Presbytery of Franklin, 8 pastors and stated supplies, and 19 churches."

Our deficiency is probably from 15 to 25 per Conference, averaging probably 20—being an aggregate of 720 needed in the traveling connection.

The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia has 175 parishes and only 107 clergymen of all orders; and in Texas the same Church has 16 parishes and only 9 clergymen.

The Baptists have 4,000 churches destitute of pastors, and, besides, need from 400 to 500 preachers to supply the vacancies.

Report of the New School Presbyterian General Assembly, recently

"Taking the five principal Seminaries in New England and New York, viz., Andover, Yale, Bangor, Union, and Auburn, we find the result as follows, as respects their progress, viz.:—

103 less, in the term ending with 1850, than with the term ending with 1840; yet at that time our population was greater by 6,000,000. The number should have been, in 1850, 802, instead of 490.

"Take another statement:—In 1840, our population was 17,000,000; students in all the Seminaries, the Presbyterian and Congregational, 793; in 1850, 23,000,000; students 723—should have been in the above ratio, 1,073; in 1856, 27,500,000, students less—should be 1,282; in 1863, will be 34,000,000, students less—should be 1,596. All the Seminaries under the care of this body have only produced 31 ministers this year. From Auburn Seminary there is not one, yet Western New York wants fifty. Such is the report of the Board of Directors.

"The Association of Massachusetts, where, of all other places, we should least expect it, has 200 vacant churches. How are we to provide ministers for our vacant churches, for the mighty West, and for the wastes of heathenism?

"General Association of Massachusetts, N. S., by Rev. J. Jay Dana. There were in connection with the Association, 465 churches, 366 pastors, 52 stated supplies, 135 ministers without charge. The cause of so many being without charge was, that a great number were employed in the Colleges.

"The New School Assembly includes 24 Synods, 108 Presbyteries, 1,567 ministers, 111 licentiates, 238 candidates for the ministry, 1,659 churches, and 143,629 communicants.

"The old School Assembly includes 30 Synods, 148 Presbyteries, 2,261 ministers, 237 licentiates, 435 candidates for the ministry, 3,079 churches, and 231,404 communicants.

"The Rev. Theodore Dwight, D.D., from the General Conference of Maine, tendered the Christian salutations of that body to the Assembly. He represented 240 churches, having 210 ministers.

"The Rev. Reuben Smith, from the Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin, addressed the Assembly. This body consisted of 136 churches, and only 107 ministers, of whom but 25 are pastors.

"Rev. Mr. Polhemus, delegate from the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church, addressed the Assembly. He said that the Synod now comprised 364 churches, and 345 ministers.

Report of the Old School Presbyterian Assembly, New York, 1856.

"Rev. Dr. Hewitt said that he was present at a meeting of the Assembly forty years ago. The contrast between the condition of the Assembly then and now was worthy of remark. Then, the Synods numbered 10; Presbyteries, 43; ministers, 511; churches, 379; communicants, 37,208. Now, the Synods number 30; Presbyteries, 148; ministers, 2,266; churches, 3,079; communicants, 231,404. If the Assembly had not been divided by differences of opinion, the statistics would have been at the present time, Synods, 511; Presbyteries, 256; ministers, 3,778; churches, 4,738; communicants, 374,433.

"The report of the committee was adopted.

"Rev. T. Shepard, delegate from the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island, reported to the Assembly. At present the body comprises 22 churches, 17 ministers, 2,717 communicants; additions during the year, 268; children in the Sabbath Schools, 3,133. \$13,461,085 have been contributed to charitable objects, during the year. Four churches are now destitute of ministers.

"Rev. W. R. Jewitt, delegate from the General Association of New Hampshire, reported. It includes 13 associations, 200 churches, 160 preachers, and between 20,000 and 30,000 members. Additions during the year, 1,000."

## We add a partial summary, cut from the Daily Western Christian Advocate:—

"We see it stated that of 2,261 ministers in the Old School Presbyterian connection, only 1,088, less than one-half, are pastors or pastors elect; 465 are stated supplies; leaving 608 as professors, teachers, secretaries, editors, domestic and foreign missionaries, or infirm. Of 3,079 churches, only 1,108 have pastors, 951 have stated supplies, 751 are vacant, 259 are not classified—most of them vacant, doubtless.

"Admitting these figures to be correct, as we presume they are, what a lesson of content they teach Methodists. They show that two-thirds of the churches in the denomination named are without regular pastors! Nearly a thousand ministers, too, are without a fixed relation to any church! Under our system such a result is scarcely possible."

These are a few instances of the alarming deficiency which is felt everywhere.

It raises a most serious question for American Protestantism—a question, nothing less, in its import, than self-preservation!

If we cannot supply 27,000,000, how shall we

meet the demands of the 100,000,000 that will, at no distant day, dwell in our midst?

Now let us pause, and review the ground. We have seen that possible triumph is the standard of duty. That possibility has been faintly delineated. Now, when we hold before us the magnificent ideal, which reason and Scripture compel us to believe might have been real, and contrast that with the facts which stand all around us, revealing actual attainments—the mind sickens at the view. and the heart shudders for the interests of bleeding humanity. Much as has been done, and much as we would rejoice in the triumph of the past, we would not, we dare not, listen to the cowardly report of the timorous spies, who, by their acts, would turn us back to the wilderness of present attainment. No! in Heaven's name, let us go on! The God of Israel, "He is our rearward, we shall not be moved!"

But, let us remember, deep is our guilt, and perilous our condition, if we do not aspire, with earnest endeavor, to reach the very pinnacle of possible usefulness. Straight is the gate and narrow is the way. How straight and how narrow, but few realize! May the Holy Spirit wake us up to a sense of our condition. O for the sanctifying energy of the Holy Ghost! The life-giving power of the Son of God! God was honored in the gift of his Son—Christ was honored in the gift of the

gospel. The Holy Ghost is honored in the trophies of redemption! And the true power of the Church can only be appreciated by regarding each individual as, in a certain sense, an embodiment of Divinity!

Greece boasted a rabble of divinities, numbering 30,000, and Rome rejoiced in 300,000; but Christendom can exult in millions-not gods, but hearts allied to Deity—and possessing a might far superior to the fabled prowess of their mythic monsters of the celestial world. Three million prayers going up to heaven;—the libation of 3,000,000 lives poured out to salvation's cause; -3,000,000 mighty arms lifting this dark world to mercy's footstool;-3,000,000 souls taking hold of the strength of the Almighty; -3,000,000 incarnations of redemption's might; -3,000,000 God-sent heralds of compassion: -3,000,000 centres of diffusive light and all-conquering power-what might they not do? Tell me not the world is great! their love may be greater! Tell me not its sins are high! their piety may be higher! Tell me not its pollutions are deep! their sympathies may be deeper! Tell me not that the conquest is great, and beyond our reach! 3,000,000 warriors spring out full-armed for the combat. Tell me not all is dark, and their case is hopeless! 3,000,000 beacons gleam out amid the gloom, and give the lie to the false assertion. The world may be saved: yes, it may be saved; all glory to the Lamb! shall be, when the Church girds herself for it.

## CHAPTER IV.

SOME LEADING FACTS AND TENDENCIES OF THE TIMES.

There is a God in the fleeting events of the present, as well as in the recorded results of the past. To learn to read his will, as written out in the characters of passing facts, is to gain possession of a running commentary upon revelation, and find duty defined, and responsibility graduated upon the scale of surrounding circumstances.

What, then, are those significant circumstances of the present, which write out upon the wall of existence the great purposes of the Divine Mind?

The first leading fact which we shall notice is: 1st. The restlessness and intense activity of the times.

The day of the world's quiescence has passed away. Everything is in motion. A feverish restlessness seems to possess all classes. The peasant in his cottage, and the banker in his palace; the merchant in his counting-room, and the lawyer at the bar; the doctor in his office, and the minister in his study, all feel the excitements of the age, and all engage in the grand headlong scramble. All is

bustle, confusion, strife. Woe to the lazy man! The din of Babel is in his ears; the rush of manifold activities sweeps by him; the clatter of unceasing progress confuses him.

Life is all astir. Cities spring up in a generation—towns and villages in a year—states and territories, almost before the surveyor can map them out. The quiet waters, which have only known the bark canoe, surge to the splashing of the steam paddle; the vast prairie echoes the rumble of the lightning train; the grim old forest groans out a gloomy response to the ceaseless rattle of the steam lumber mill; and the gigantic mountain frowns, as the adventurous miner digs for his treasured ores.

But scarcely has the steamboat passed, before an "opposition line" is on the chase; scarcely has the train thundered by, before an engineering party passes to stake out a better route; scarcely has the saw mill begun to play before another springs to the competition task; scarcely does the miner strike his pick, before another digs his trench. Like the ocean billow, we are ever moving, and like that billow lashed by the tempest's fury, we rush, we roll, we sink, we rise, we dash, we are hurled, we know not where, we scarce know how.

Fiery, impetuous, headlong, reckless is the spirit of the age. The press groans beneath its

burden—day and night. The telegraph ceaselessly flashes our restless thoughts. The axle becomes heated before we tire. Theiron arms of our engine weary before our ardor cools. Steam power and lightning power are the fitting emblems of the day. Thirty miles an hour for our merchandise is too slow, and we must have an air telegraph to express our goods from New York to Boston in fifteen minutes. Eleven days is too long a time to spend upon the ocean waste, and we must harness the lightning, and bid it plunge us through from Europe to America in two!

Texas and California in six years are too slow accessions to republican rule, and Central America must be taught to march to the tune of "Hail Columbia" too. The boy is a man before he leaves his "teens," the girl a lady ere she doffs her pinafore. We give ourselves no time to rest, and are proverbially lank, because we have no chance to accumulate.

The Church feels the influence, and grows restless too. Old forms must be banished!

Time-honored customs become obsolete, and progress is the watchword of every innovation. Ministries long settled have become itinerant! The Watchman and Reflector, in 1853, states that out of 190 Baptist pastors in Massachusetts during the four years ending April 1st, 1852, 170 changed places and 6 died, leaving but 14 station-

ary. For the same period, 61 out of 71 Baptist pastors in New Hampshire changed places and 3 died, leaving 7 stationary. Connecticut, Maine, and Rhode Island, it is believed, would present a similar table of facts.

The same fact has been remarked of other denominations in nearly all parts of the land! It is an evidence of the restlessness of the age. The danger lies in the extreme! It may lead to a temerity little short of madness in the cherished plans it has devised or endorsed. It may lead to a tampering with institutions which ought to be touched with reverence, if at all, by the hand of change. With such a spirit of commotion abroad, we need to look well to our anchorage, that it be secure.

2d. Its Inventiveness.

In no age of the world's history have the inventive powers of man been so severely taxed, and with such grand results. Scarcely does a day pass that does not record some new invention, or some important improvement of the old. The application of steam power revolutionized mechanical labor, and every year threatens still further changes by the introduction of a still more potent agency. Not only in mechanics, but in morals and in government, is this tendency exhibited. Only let the Church keep pace with the spirit of the age, and all will be well. It will be so. God had

concealed, in the first printed alphabet that was ever formed, the printed Bible to bless the world. and in the first steam engine ever built, a steam press to strike off the impressions, and a steamboat to carry them as messengers of compassion to the lost millions of heathen lands. And who shall say but, in the first telegraph that was ever operated, he had the tongues of his own missionaries to speak to China's myriads through the wiry network that may yet enfold her? We must still have a spirituality that will nail the first patent of every invention to the cross of Christ. In the Bible, Tract, Sunday School, and Missionary Societies, we have the examples of the consecration of social inventions which we shall ever need to imitate. By these, the Church now presents the most thrilling spectacle of organized activity that the world has ever seen. Wheels within wheels are everywhere. Plans working within plans, and schemes revolving around schemes are exhibited, till their orbits cross every man's pathway, and their wonderful revolutions challenge his admiring support. But this inventiveness is a sword which cuts both ways. It has a potency for evil as well as good; and the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Let the genius of Christianity be on the alert. Especially, let the press be driven to its utmost effort.

The enemies of truth are in the field. The tract, and the entertaining periodical and paper, not religious, yet religiously infused, are our hope, together with the stern mandate of Christian duty, which must be spoken to every invention.

3d. Its Recklessness and Worldliness.

Drive ahead, and never mind the consequences, if an "almighty dollar" is to be gained.

Put on the steam, over open drawbridges, out of time, wrong end foremost, any way, only get through as soon as possible! Never mind the whistle, let the bell rest, throw in the fuel, drive on, drive on, through fog and mist, and ice, over broken rails, and through dangerous passes—never mind, some have gone safely, and perhaps we may; never mind, we say, put on the steam! 30, 40, 50 miles per hour. Here we go, hurrah! we'll be in time, and so goes the world!

To-day we have a grand smash up of the cars, echoed by some steamboat explosion or collision: they thrill a moment through the heart and the cheek pales, but another glance of that dollar, and away we go again, crying with all our might, more steam, more steam!

Which boat is fastest? not Which is safest? is the general inquiry. Thus we live and thus we speculate. Now in stocks, then in lands; now in physics, then in theology. Anybody is fit for anything. The salve and essence peddler makes a

doctor, the gassy pettifogger makes a lawyer, the windy moralist a minister, and so we thrive!

Anybody starts a system, anybody writes a book. Anybody makes a panacea, anybody discovers a specific, either for the soul or body! Fast horses, fast boys, fast men, fast life, more steam—and more steam—till the velocity of our life hurls us into untimely graves.

An insane worldliness seems to be the ruling spirit of the age! It stalks everywhere.

The lecturer lectures for money.

The professional man practices for money.

The teacher teaches for money.

The tradesman trades for money.

The laborer toils for money.

The politician lays his coils for money, or its equivalent, worldly honor.

The medium raps for money; and I fear, too, many preachers preach for money.

Money—MONEY—MONEY is the cry that wastes not, tires not, ceases not. It eats out the piety of the Church, swallows up the immortal hopes of the world, and throws the reins of an unrelaxing despotism into the hands of the god of this world.

If there is a dragon that needs to be chained by the angel from heaven, and cast into the bottomless pit, it is this mammon-god.

4th. Its superficiality and want of principle.

Our whole life is superficial!

The tendency of social intercourse and sentiments is, to make a showy and superficial society. To dress well and appear well, is the climax of desired attainment, and the great object of polite education. Our educational system spreads over a vast surface, but, it is to be feared, fails in the thoroughness which ought to characterize it in view of the light and advantages of the times. This tendency has scaled the walls of the Church, and a transient and superficial piety is too often the result.

In literature, the veriest trash, if it be only well seasoned with a certain degree of sickly sentiment, is in great demand. Benevolence is superficial. Many will give liberally; but the name of the donor must be announced in the great congregation and heralded by the daily papers to the extremities of the land.

A want of principle is especially observable! No one knows who to trust! Some Schuyler lays his plans everywhere. We are cheated in quality, weight, and measure. We put our money in the bank, and some rascally defaulter pockets it, and starts for Europe. We get our lives or buildings insured, and lo! it is a sham! We take a periodical for the amusement of our children, and it poisons them! We buy a patent drug to heal, warranted "all-healing," "never-failing," "safe

and sure," and find it directly the reverse. We buy village lots, and they prove a speculation We go to see a sight, and are shown a hoax. other age could have produced a Barnum! it is hoped that this may never raise another. The extravagance of the times is a result of this superficiality; and the want of principle is, in part, the consequence of this extravagance. When dress and equipage are made the standard of respectability in any community, it will certainly afford aspirants enough for the honor, who will question the moral character of few schemes, if they only lead to the goal of desire. When the merchant's store costs \$300,000, he must needs charge the public with the cost of maintaining his extravagance, by an increased profit on his goods. If one were alone in it, he might be punished, by leaving him "alone in his glory," himself his only customer; but when the same extravagance is universal, it is not so easy to find a remedy, for the people must be clothed and fed.

By a recent statement in the New York Journal of Commerce, I learn that, in New York city, nearly \$4,000,000 are being expended this season, mostly for decorations! \$4,000,000 drawn from the active business capital of a city (as most of this probably is) must be felt somewhere. But the greatest injury is the imitation of this example, by those who have not the means, until want

of principle, bankruptcy, and ruin are the consequences. Our increasing extravagance as a nation is ominous of evil at no distant day.

The cost of maintaining a single church in New York city is said to be \$22,505 per year. And, the writer adds, there are not more than ten in the city that equal it, but there are three or four that exceed even this amount. We need make no comments!

5th. Its skepticism and pietism.

Never were opposites more closely blended, or in a more anomalous position than now.

The man of letters doubts, the statesman doubts, the professional man doubts, the man of little learning doubts, the illiterate doubt, the scientific investigator doubts. So, many doubt but still believe much more than they doubt.

They doubt the Bible, and believe the crazy vagaries of Mormonism. They doubt long settled facts, and heartily throw their credence at the feet of a few rapping and tipping women. They doubt concerning all belief, and yet believe all unbelief. So, while they repudiate all religion, their very pietism compels them to adopt infidelity as their religion, and the demon of doubt as their God.

These tendencies are extreme, and hence are worthy of notice. The pietism of the age may be seized upon by the Church as a most powerful auxiliary in the work of evangelization, while the very skepticism of the day may be bent to the scathing investigation of all erroneous systems, and by the very truthfulness of Christianity may be made its most triumphant vindication.

Only let us see a *living* Christianity, glowing with the unction of the Holy Ghost, and, as surely as the needle points to the pole, the pietism of the age will be attracted to it, while skepticism will oppose till overpowered by the effulgence of its evidence, and then will come all the more meekly, and sit at the feet of Jesus. O for the shining power of the Holy Ghost! The skepticism of the age is eminently practical, the result of the strong religious influences which exist.

Men have learned that religion is the principle from which springs all that tends to elevate the race; and hence, when atheism has presented its hideous form, they have repulsed it, as the worst enemy of their interests. Hence the advocates of infidelity have been compelled to change their tactics; and now the great humanities of the age are taken under their especial care and claimed as their foster children. While some have openly repudiated the supernatural claims of Christianity, because it has practically failed to do what it has been expected to, others have veiled their hostility under a profession of the most profound reverence for the Bible, but a deeper love of truth! If they

love the Bible, they love science more. As if the Bible were antagonistical to scientific truths! The Bible has quite as much reason to fear its friends in this respect, as its foes?

It is sad to see to what an extent hostility to Christianity has reached, sustained as it is by such undeniable evidence. That the most profound philosopher of the age should utterly discard revealed truth, is perhaps not surprising when we recollect under what influences he has lived; but that the theory of Comte should be adopted and heralded through the world as the final climax of philosophical wisdom, by some leading English minds, who should feel as well as know the truth, is deeply to be regretted as indicating the sympathies of the educated intellect of the age. But Combe's Constitution of Man, followed by a large proportion of the issues from "Fowler's" pen, is the most dangerous of any system to which we are exposed. The more so, because so much of the good is blended with the evil as to blind the eyes of many, and render the fatal result the more certain. An untold amount of this species of infidelity exists in undetected quarters! The disciples of Emerson, Parker, Owen, Davis, etc., are using all their efforts to spread their theories through the land.

German rationalism, French socialism, native Mormonism, and other isms are all abroad, and to

what extent the youthful mind is poisoned, it is impossible to tell; but, judging from the circulation of some of their presses, it must be to a dangerous degree.



## CHAPTER V.

THE VOICE OF GOD TO THE CHURCH IN VIEW OF THESE FACTS.

THAT voice calls first of all for more of principle, not feeling. Men who will take the word of God as their rule, and bend everything to its requirements. Men of stern metal, who will ring out clear and strong upon the world the unalterable truths of God's salvation. Men who will wield the weapon of the strongest moral influence, consistent example. "Specimen Christians!" to whom the world may wonderingly look, and the Church exultantly point, as examples of what the gospel can do. Give us such men, and the hopes of the world will brighten, and her day-star speedily climb the sky. Give us such men, and the fair daughter of Zion shall no longer clothe herself in sackcloth and ashes, and hang her harp upon the willows of Babylon, refusing to sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Give us such men, and they will seize with strong arm the restless spirit of the age, and bind it to the car of Christian progress; they will render every invention tributory to the great work of evangelization; they will temper the recklessness and worldliness of the times into holy daring and benevolent acquisition; they will substitute profound principle for the superficiality and want of principle around them, and finally they will infuse a living fire into the pietism of the day, and compel its skepticism to surrender to the power of their example.

As one result of this principle, God calls for a better spirit among Christians! Says an able writer—Steward—"Christianity relies not on the number or resources of its champions, for its triumphs, but simply on their spirit."

We shall see the truth of this, when we remember that the world judges of the reality and value of religion by its practical results, within the sphere of their own observation; and if they see there the duplicate of Christ's example—their own ideal of Christian excellence personified-living, walking, talking, a thing of life, clothed in the vesture of unspotted moral purity, their hearts must melt, and "the hardest parts of the sinner will be found as powerless to resist the sharp sword of the Spirit as the softest."-Caughey. As another result of this principle, God calls for fruit bearing Christians. Not merely Christians whose labors he can consistently bless, but those who shall claim fruit as their right, and usefulness as their inheritance. Men who shall take hold of that assurance of our Lord

—"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit," and lifting it to the Throne of Mercy, by the power of that petition—"Father glorify thy name"—shall claim its fulfillment always as a covenant pledge. And then adding the supplemental plea—"I have chosen you and ordained you, that you shall go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." "And now Father keep that which I have committed unto thee, that none may be lost"—should thus win, and retain till they go to their reward.

O that we would comprehend our privileges. God has done his part. He gives to every young convert an earnest ambition to be useful. In this. He is no respecter of persons. In his commands and promises He is not. He commands us all to "covet earnestly the best gifts," and declares that " whose knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin;" and promises that "if we ask, we shall receive"-" if we cast our bread upon the waters, we shall find it after many days"-that "if we go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, we shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us." And as if to silence all doubt and quiet every fear, assures us that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and

things which we despise hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence."

Again, God calls for a more strict individualism! Generalization is the tendency of the times. Men's ideas are getting too large to dwell long upon personal responsibility! We merge our own responsibility in the duty of the mass, of the society, of the Church—forgetful that what is the duty of the whole, is, in part, a duty of each component part of that whole. The means within our reach must be used, or we fail, and by one failure the whole fails. We want to be more deeply imbued with the sentiment that the design of this life is to save the world—not to secure social position, wealth, etc., and that all the responsibility arising from the fact that we exist, and may be useful, rests upon us in our personal identical character.

Again, as a consequence of this individualism—God calls for believing Christians. Faith is the grand moving force, and the promises the fundamental law, of the kingdom of God on earth. What that force might do within the limits of its law, we do not know; but one thing we do know—it might raise the dull, inert mass of mere profession to the level of possible attainment, and then grapple with all the facts of existence, with the power of a determined conqueror. It might infuse

into the praying heart the consciousness of its strength, and inspire it to seek a sphere of action worthy of its responsibilities and its destiny. It might clothe our responsibilities with such a fixedness of identity as would extort from every prostrate soul the anxious inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and then send him forth a flaming messenger of salvation to the world around.

Again, God calls for an aggressive Christianity in the lives of his people. The first religious impulses, felt by the child of God, are aggressive. Like the first physical effort of the new-born child for air, they indicate a necessity of the being! And as, when great exertion is required, an increased action of the physical organs is demanded—so, earnest, straight-forward, zealous aggression feeds the spiritual powers, and tunes them up to greater efforts and more lasting triumphs. The most holy Christians are those who fight the most. O how much is needed a generation of daring warriors for God, who shall court danger, and esteem peril as a privilege, and sacrifice an honor!

Aggression is a law of life for the Church—may Heaven give us more of it!

Dr. Wayland relates that when the Baptist mission commenced among the Karens, the Missionary could only labor a few months in the year; but he labored faithfully, and a few were converted. The Missionary was obliged to leave his station.

but returned in a year or two, fearful that they had all been scattered, and inquired for them. Judge of his surprise when he learned that 1,500 persons awaited baptism. How was it? Each pointed his neighbor to the Saviour. There was an individual responsibility and an aggressive spirit.

In the year 1835 a Baptist church was organized in Hamburgh, in Germany, consisting of seven members! That Church has multiplied itself into 42 churches, sustaining 356 stations, numbering 4,215 communicants. How was it done? "Every disciple acknowledged the obligation laid upon him by the last command of our Lord."

They were aggressive Christians!

The truths and agencies of religion are equally well adapted to all classes and all time; hence its appeals are constant and universal; and aggression and extension enter into its very nature. Hence the questionable benevolence which would merely make the gospel accessible to all, finds no place here, but a burning love and zeal, which would press it upon each, is the distinguishing characteristic of its beneficence. God has done everything necessary for the salvation of the world, even to the impression of the excitements of his Spirit to that end, so that nothing is now needed, but for men to urge home the claims of Heaven, upon every one, by precept, by example, by the powerful persuasions of urgent prayer, and vehement

exhortation. Last of all, God calls for *Christians* for the times! Men of depth of principle, and piety sufficient to sustain them in position, amid the whirl and foam of this superficial age. Men of sober sense and modest pretensions, to rebuke the extravagance of the day.

Men of far-seeing sagacity, and calm, determined prudence, to stand at the helm of the Church, amid the reckless race for worldly bubbles. Men who will estimate wealth, not so much by the sensual gratification it is capable of giving, as a means to lay up treasures in the heavens. Men of sober, but scrutinizing faith, who shall stand as the wave-washed rock, the same amid the commotion of the elements around, unmoved by the taunts, or sneers, or ridicule, of the skeptical and profane. Men who shall be ever on the alert to lead every device, and invention and scheme to the great work of advancing the interests of the race, and harness every promising change in some way to the car of salvation.

Men who shall ride upon the very crest of the wave of progress, who shall roll on the first tide of emigration, who shall burn with the intensest fires of activity, but all with a settled purpose to range side by side with the adventurous spirit of the age, only to chain that spirit to the right and the true and the pure! To soar with it in its loftiest flight, to delve with it in its deepest mine,

to roam with it in its widest excursions, all still to point out God, and humanity, as the end of all effort, and the sum of all duty.

Men who shall claim success as their right, and conquest as their dower. Who shall dwell in such an atmosphere of holy love as to bring down, upon their associates and the world, the convicting influence of the "power of God." Men whose very lives shall be a standing refutation of Infidelity, and whose exertions shall prove that the humanities of the age are dear to their hearts.

Men who will "surrender their hearts to a single principle, and their lives to a single impulse," and who shall look continually for the outpouring of the Spirit from on high, and labor for its speedy appearing. Men, in short, whose battle-cry shall be, not—the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, but—the power of the Holy Ghost, the gift of believers! The power of the Holy Ghost the salvation of the Church! The power of the Holy Ghost the hope of the world!

The power of the Holy Ghost mine now and forever!

But there seems to be a voice from God for the Christianity of this Union, which we would interrogate in another form. Wonderful was the birth, glorious has been the progress, and magnificent is the destiny of this land. Cradled in the hand of a watchful Providence, she sang her morning song to

the stern old tones of Puritanic devotion; and her maturity has been decked with the graces of a Christian education and adorned with the charms of a fireside piety.

Let us look at a few facts which seem to be pregnant with significance to the Churches of the land.

1st. The Extent of our Territory!

This can be best appreciated by comparison. Missouri is larger than all Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland combined, with their 11,938,000 inhabitants.

Add Texas to Upper California, Virginia, and Florida, and they equal all Great Britain, France, Turkey in Europe, and Austria together, with their 109,660,000 inhabitants.

Illinois would make forty such states as Rhode Island, and Minnesota sixty. Missouri is larger than all New England. Ohio exceeds either Ireland, Scotland, or Portugal, and equals Belgium, Scotland, and Switzerland together. Missouri is more than half as large as Italy. Missouri and Illinois are larger than England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales.

Our whole area is 2,963,666 square miles; and we have a shore line of 30,000 miles. "The limits of the United States, when their independence was achieved (in 1783), did not exceed 820,680 square miles. Louisiana, purchased from France

in 1803, and Florida from Spain in 1819, added respectively an extent of 899,579, and 66,900 square miles. In 1842 and '46 the northern boundary was settled by treaties with Great Britain, confirming the rights of the United States to 308,052 square miles, included in the territory of Oregon, etc. In 1846 Texas was annexed, with an area of 318,000 square miles; and by a treaty soon afterwards with Mexico, an area of 522,955 additional square miles was incorporated. Thus did the territory of the United States double itself in the first twenty years of its existence, and thus has it increased over three-fold in less than sixty years. The new treaty with Mexico secured 27,500 square miles additional, swelling the aggregate to 2,963,666 square miles, July 1st, 1854."—See Abstract of Census, p. 32.

"The territorial extent of the Republic is, therefore, nearly ten times as large as that of Great Britain and France combined; three times as large as the whole of France, Britain, Austria, Prussia, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Denmark together; and one and a half times as large as the Russian Empire in Europe; one-sixth only less than the are acovered by the fifty-nine or sixty empires, states, and republics of Europe; and of equal extent with the Roman Empire, or that of Alexander, neither of which is said to have exceeded 3,000,000 square miles."—Ibid.

A traveler starting from Paris to visit Vienna, in Austria, would tread the soil of five empires, yet would only go as far as from Boston, Mass., to Pittsburgh, in Pennsylvania.

From London to Constantinople (1,490 miles) across Europe, is not as far as from Boston to Nashville, Tenn. (1,590 miles).

It is only ten miles further from London to Rome (910 miles) than from Charleston, S. C., to Hartford, Conn. (900 miles).

It is not so far from St. Petersburg to Thebes, in Egypt (2,800 miles), as from the source of the Mississippi to its mouth (2,986 miles).

And from St. Petersburg to Madrid (2,100 miles), crossing eight empires, it is not as far as from Pittsburgh, Penn., to New Orleans, La., via the river (2,175 miles).

The following statement, taken from the remarks of Lieut. Maury, will give us another view of this subject, of considerable importance.

A Comparison of the Extent of Territory drained into the Great Basins of the Old and New World.

Rivers of Florida and
Texas, 529,000
Rivers of Mexico and
Central America, 300,000
Total gamere miles 1 811 000

GULF OF MEXICO.

MEDITERRANE	AN.
Rivers of Europe, Nile,	$\substack{1,160,000\\520,000}$
Total square miles,	1,680,000

#### CARIBBEAN SEA.

Amazon,	1,796,000
Orinoco and others,	700,000

Total square miles, 2,496,000

Add the above, and it gives us 4,307,000 square miles.

#### INDIAN OCEAN.

Euphrates,	196,000
Indus,	312,000
Ganges,	432,000
Irrawaddy,	331,000
Others of India,	173,000

Total square miles, 1,444,000

Add to the above, 730,000 for the Basins of Western Europe, and it gives a total of 3,854,000 square miles drained into these three central Basins.

"The area of all the valleys drained by the rivers of Europe, which empty into the Atlantic—all the valleys drained by the rivers of Asia, which empty into the Indian Ocean, and of all the valleys drained by the rivers of Africa and Europe, which empty into the Mediterranean—do not cover an extent of territory as great as that included in the valleys drained by the American rivers alone, which discharge themselves into one central sea."—Abstract of Census.

## 2d. Our Resources.

Our Commercial, Agricultural, and Manufacturing Resources are fully commensurate with the extent of our domain.

Our Steam Marine includes about 1,400 vessels, manned by 30,000 persons.

"The Mississippi and its tributaries have a tonnage of more than 400,000, a way commerce of \$100,000,000, a direct river commerce of

\$75,000,000, with a floating commerce of twice this amount, besides passenger trade. There are on these waters between 550 and 600 steamers, with thousands of flat-boats, though it is only thirty-eight years since the first steamer, *Enterprise*, made her first trip from New Orleans to Cincinnati, in twenty-three days, at \$130 fare. From a single steamboat, in 1824, the lake navigation opened in 1849 with 143 steamers, 5 barks, 93 brigs, 548 schooners, and 128 sloops. The Chicago convention, in 1847, reported 1,200 steamboats on all the western waters, and an inland annual commerce of \$440,000,000, rapidly increasing."

Our home and foreign commerce is from \$1,500,

000,000 to 2,000,000,000 per annum.

Our Tonnage, June 30th, 1854, was 5,666,418: being more than Great Britain has. In 1853 we built a tonnage of 425,572, while in the same time Great Britain only built 203,171—less than half the amount! Upwards of 30,000 vessels enter and depart from our ports annually. Our commerce will soon outstrip that of every other nation on the globe, as already it vies with the greatest.

Our Manufacturing Resources are nearly unbounded. Water privileges are almost innumerable; while the supply of coal is utterly inexhaustible! A fact of no slight importance, when we reflect to what extent steam will yet be employed in manufacturing pursuits.

When we add to the above, the commercial facilities, inland and foreign, and our agricultural capabilities, we shall be justified in the assertion that not another nation on earth has, within herself, such natural elements of greatness and prosperity. A few facts, promiscuously thrown together, will be sufficient to make this fact apparent.

In 1828 we had 3 miles of railroad; Jan. 1st, 1855, 21,310 miles completed, besides 16,975 in process of construction. About one half the railroads in the entire world are in the United States, and were built at a cost of \$621,316,303. And their earnings, in 1854, amounted to \$50,000,000. We have about 42,000 miles of telegraph, and nearly 5,000 miles of canal.

The product of copper, in 1854, was upwards of 4,000,000 pounds. Michigan has the richest mines in the world.

The lead produced in 1845 was 59,360,000 pounds. The mines of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa are unsurpassed for richness.

The amount of iron, in 1854, was 1,000,000 tons of which Pennsylvania yielded nearly one half.

In 1850, 9,763,840 bushels of salt were produced: and we have 225,000 square miles of coal bed.

California is estimated to have produced in gold, \$450,000,000.

The agricultural capabilities are immense, and in the Mississippi Valley unequaled, except by the Valley of the Amazon, in South America.

Our agricultural products, in 1854, were valued at \$1,600,000,000. Yet, only about one-sixth of the national area is occupied, and about one-thirteenth cultivated. At the same ratio, were it all cultivated, it would easily support 300,000,000 inhabitants.

We raised	l, in 1850:	Wheat 100,503,899	bushels
66	"	Oats 146,678,879	66
6	и	Rice 215,312,710	66
66	"	Cotton 987,449,600	pounds.
64	"	Butter 313,266,962	66
66	66	Cheese 105,535,219	66
44	"	Sugar 281,830,886	66
. "	6	Molasses . 9,700,606	gallons.
66	in 1840	Potatoes. 108,298,060	bushels.

The two greatest grain markets, in the Old World, are Archangel, 9,528,000 bushels; Galatz and Ibraila, 8,320,000 bushels, per annum.

The two greatest, in America, are Chicago, 16,633,813 bushels; and Buffalo, 25,022,177 bushels.

From a recent newspaper article, I find that the eight States—Ohio, Illinois, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin, shipped, for the East, this season, 2,430,887 hogs, which, at an average of only 200 pounds, would be equal to 486,177,400 pounds of pork produced in a single

season, besides what was reserved for home consumption.

In order to enable the reader the better to appreciate the vastness of our resources, I subjoin some facts and estimates relating to six States of our confederacy, and shall then leave him to apply the results to the nation at large.

#### AN EXHIBIT

Of the Agricultural Capabilities of the six States—New York, Pennsylvania. Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The land is divided into Improved, Occupied, but not improved, and Unoccupied.

	Improved.	Occupied.	Unoccupied.
New York Pennsylvania - Virginia Ohio Indiana Illinois	12,408,964 8,623,619 10,360,135 9,851,493 5,046,543 5,039,545	6,710,120 6,294,728 15,792,176 8,146,000 7,746,879 6,997,867	11,680,916 14,521,653 6,712,969 7,576,467 8,844,338 23,421,788
Total	51,330,299	51,687,770	72,758,131 acres

In 1850 the above States raised as follows:

	N. York.	Penn.	Virginia.	Ohio.	Indiana.	Illinois.
Rye, Oats, Corn, Potatoes Barley, Buckw't	4,148,182 26,552,814 17,858,400 15,403,997 3,585,059	21,538,156 19,835,214 6,032,904 165,584	458,930 10,179,144 35,254,319 3,130,567 25,437	425,918 13,472,742 59,078,695 5,245,760 354,358	78,792 5,655,014 52,964,363 2,285,048 45,483	10,087,241 57,646,984 2,672,294 110,795
Peas& } Beans, }	741,546	55,231	521,579	60,168	35,773	82,814
Total,	84,595,451	69,993,632	60,997,490	93,763,052	67,428,671	80,282,571

Grand Total, 457,060,867 bushels.

Thus these six States raised, in 1850, 457,060,867 bushels of the articles named in the above table. Supposing that three-fourths of the occupied but

unimproved land might be made as productive as the improved, it would add 348,892,434 bushels more. And, then, supposing further, that one-third of the remaining unoccupied land is capable of the same productiveness, it will give us 218,274,390 bushels more, being a grand total of 1,024,227,691 bushels; equal to 298 bushels for every family now in the Union!

In the same year (1850) the same States made 265,996,398 pounds of butter and cheese, and slaughtered animals to the value of \$48,276,131, to each of which add, as above, for supposed capacity of increase—265,996,398 for the improved lands, 199,497,297 for the occupied lands, and 125,678,856 for the unoccupied lands, and the total is 591,172,551 pounds; or 120 pounds for each family now in the land.

Slaughtered animals,	-	-	~		- 3	\$48,276,131
Supposed increase for		ipied,	-	-		36,207,096
Increase for unoccupie	ed lands,	-	-		-	22,809,627

Total, - - \$107,292,854

Or, in ordinary times, at an average of 8 cents per pound, equal to 275 pounds for each family in the Union now.

The whole area of these States is 283,534 square miles; population, 10,651,038: equal to about 39 to the square mile.

That of France, Portugal, Switzerland, Wur-

temberg, and Greece combined, 284,027 square miles, with a population of 44,375,916; equal to about 156 to the square mile.

Spain and Prussia united contain 290,191 square miles; population, 30,871,638: equal to over 106 to the square mile.

Austria, Belgium, Holland, and Modena comprise 283,675 square miles; population, 45,227,685 equal to about 160 to the square mile.

Now, if any one will be at the pains to compare the physical geography, climate, agricultural, and mineral resources, and manufacturing and commercial facilities of any of the three combinations of European nations, with the States mentioned, he will be prepared to admit the fact, that these States are capable of sustaining a larger aggregate population than is exhibited by any of the combinations above! China supports about 300 population to the square mile, and we think it would not be extravagant to assume the capabilities of the States, with all the advantages of science, to equal at least two-thirds the burden of China in her almost total destitution of scientific improvements. Assuming 200 per square mile, then, as the limit of ultimate capacity, this ratio will give a population of 56,706,800, which ought not to surprise us, when we recollect that these very States have increased their population five-fold in fifty years. But are their resources sufficient to

sustain such an increase? The agricultural exhibit above, leaves no doubt in that respect.

The manufacturing and commercial resources are fully equal to the agricultural; and supposing the first only to be developed as they have been since 1837, in Massachusetts, the result would be astonishing.

The population of Massachusetts is 1,133,123. The Boston Bee states the value of the articles manufactured in 1855 at \$295,820,881, from an invested capital of \$120,683,258, giving employment to 245,908 persons. This is an increase of 138 per cent. since 1845, and 242 per cent. since 1837, while the population has only increased 34 per cent. since 1845, and 62 per cent. since 1837. Even this is supposed to be an under-estimate. It would be nearer the truth to put \$350,000,000, instead of the above \$295,820,881.

The United States together have a density of about 16 persons to the square mile; excluding Texas and California, it would be over 21 to the square mile. The territories have one inhabitant only to every 16 square miles. Texas and California have less than one to the square mile.

Whilst nearly 25 inhabit a square mile in the region east of the Mississippi, and nearly 20 in the Atlantic slope: in the Mississippi Valley there are but about 7, and west of the Mississippi less than

one, and in the Pacific slope only one to every 16 square miles.

With the density of the Southern States we should have a population of 45,000,000; with the density of the New England States, 123,000,000; and with the density of the Middle States, 170,000,000. With the density of Sweden and Norway, the *least* populous of any of the European States, we should have 45,000,000; with that of Prussia, over 80,000,000; of Spain, 200,000,000; of France, 500,000,000; of Britain, 660,000,000; or of Belgium, 1,150,000,000!—Abstract of Census, p. 42.

Our population is now about 27,500,000, equal to about 9 persons to the square mile, taking our territory all together; Great Britain has 224, Holland 295, and Belgium 330 to the square mile; China, with a sterile soil, and an area less than half of ours by 367,668 square miles, supports 387,632,907 inhabitants!

Notwithstanding our population, compared with this, is small, its increase has been astonishing. In 1853 or '54, I met with a statement like this: "The oldest native inhabitant of Chicago is a young lady 22 years of age. When she was two years old, they had one weekly mail brought on horseback. Now, 14 daily, several weekly and tri-weekly mails; 30,000 letters daily, and upwards of 50,000 inhabitants.

"Forty years ago Michigan had 5,000 population, now 500,000; 14 years ago Wisconsin had 31,000 population, now 460,000; 22 years ago Iowa none! now 285,000; 24 years ago the whole region north of the Ohio and west of the Mississippi had 1,840,000, now near  $7\frac{1}{2}$  millions! 62 years ago, a line drawn from Lake Erie along the Alleghany and Cumberland Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico, all the white population west, did not exceed 250,000, now more than 11,000,000 are there!"

At the ratio of our increase, as a whole, we shall number, in 1900, more than 100,000,000; and in 1950, 400,000,000; and, in 2000, the present population of the entire globe!

It may not equal that; but it must be astounding, especially when we consider the extent of our resources. The climate, too, is favorable for a vast increase of population. With us the ratio of deaths to the population is one and one-third per cent.; in England it is over two per cent.; and in France nearly three. True, the difference may be owing somewhat to their crowded masses, especially in cities; but we may have twice their numbers, and then have room enough for twice as many more.

We are, in a great measure, free from the enormous burdens which load down the nations of Europe.

Our army only numbers about 11,000 men, and our public debt is \$41,878,831.

The army of Prussia numbers 226,925 men, and her debt is \$152,569,815.

The army of Spain numbers 136,787 men, and her debt is \$914,930,000.

The army of Austria numbers 414,000 men, and and her debt is \$511,500,000.

The army of Russia numbers 700,000 men, and her debt is \$567,772,640.

The army of France numbers 401,247 men, and her debt is \$137,500,000.

The army of England numbers 144,035 men, and her debt is \$3,365,840,580.

The interest and management of this debt amount annually to the enormous sum of \$140,972,535!

The populations of Britain and the United States are about equal; yet the *interest* on her debt amounts annually to more than three times the whole amount of our debt! The cost of maintaining our government, including state governments, is probably not far from \$70,000,000 per annum; that of England \$500,000,000. Yet be it remembered, the population of the two countries is about equal, while our poverty and pauperism is hardly a tithe of theirs. Yet theirs, next to ours, is the most favored nation on the globe. But what a difference!

The state of our publishing interests demands a moment's attention.

The Newspaper Exchange, of Boston, circulates 120,000 copies weekly. The Sun, Herald, Tribine, Times, of New York, have an aggregate circulation of 140,000; and, with three readers each, are perused by 420,000,000 people.

Printed matter and newspapers, to the number of 14,368,000 passed through the Chicago Post-office, during the last *quarter* of 1855.

The city was settled only twenty-five years ago and now contains a population of about 88,000. "The number of newspapers published annually in the United States is estimated at 412,880,000, equal to  $16\frac{1}{2}$  copies for every man, woman, and child. In the British Empire only 1 is published for every 2,000 inhabitants. Belgium has 1 to every 25,000; Prussia 1 to every 20,186, and Russia 1 to 1,000,000."—From Holdredge's Statistical Almanac, about 1853. The number of newspapers now published is 426,409,975.

"Our book publishing business, though not yet a century and a half old, has already become more extensive than in the wealthiest and most civilized countries of the Old World. The number of books published in 1853 was about 730, of which 278 were reprints of English works, 35 translations of foreign authors, and 417 of native production. Classified as follows. History, 46; Fiction, 59;

Theology, 97; Poetry, 28; Travels, 29; Juvenile, 49; Educational, 24; Scientific, 45; Law, 14; Geography, 6; Philology, 5; Ethnology, 5; and Miscellaneous, 180. The number of publishing houses in the United States is about 375, some of which are among the largest in the world. The number of American books reprinted in England, in 1853, was 119; and in 1854, 185. The three great seats of the publishing business are Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. The amount of printed matter annually issued in either one of these cities probably equals, if it does not exceed, that published in London or Paris."—Lippincott's Gazetteer of the World, p. 1991.

Now, when we remember that Providence has planted this nation here, as it were, in the centre of the commerce of the world (San Francisco and Monterey being from 1,000 to 7,000 miles nearer the great ports of Calcutta, Bombay, Japan, China, Australia, etc., than European ports are), and that He works by centralization in all the great plans of his government, our situation, our progress, our destiny, are all pregnant with considerations for us to ponder! And every new development of our resources and influence can but give a more profound significance to every such intimation. In view of all, can it be too much to assert that America is designed to regenerate the world?

I have said that God works by centralization.

From the centre of the old Roman world came forth Jesus of Nazareth, to plant the religion of the Cross upon the soil of Palestine. From the centre of the modern world stood out a Luther, to reform the corrupt and tyrannical Church of Rome.

From the centre of still more modern influence arose a Wesley, to regenerate the lapsed reformation of the sixteenth century.

And now, from the centre of the commercial world, rises a nation, giant-born and world aspiring; lisping but yesterday its first utterance, bold, significant and heaven inspired; to-day shouting it forth to the enslaved of every land, Freedom, civil and religious—the inheritance of man! A nation with such an accumulation of resources, that it would seem as if Providence designed to unfold here the last, the greatest, the crowning empire of earth, the consummation of national advancement, and the culmination of humanity's hopes!

It seems to us that God leaves his footprints, not merely in the geological formations of ages, but in the passing events of life, and, especially, in the not yet truly written history of nations. In every expansion of our territory, in every triumph of our principles, in every duplicate of our institutions, and, especially, in every fresh Liberia that dark, persecuted Africa shall afford, we read the great fact prophetically revealed—America, if true to herself and her God, will regenerate the world! For

one brief season would we like to hold the Apocalyptic pen of our future destiny, to show to others and ourselves the magnificent pageant that, in dim and shadowy outline, gathers upon the surface of our thought. But though we may not write it here, nor sketch it upon the speaking canvas, yet may we, from its transient vision, gather an inspiration which shall impel us to climb the rugged steeps of present duty, knowing well that every step's advance leads nearer to the sunlit summit of our destiny.

Let every Christian, then, feel that he is living not only for self, but the world. Let his efforts be to strengthen the foundations of our institutions, by purifying the hearts of the masses.

Let literature, science, art—everything, be placed, just as far as you can possibly make it, under the surveillance of an enlightened Christianity.

Let the political demagogue and official intriguer know that when he is attempting to destroy the sacred influence of Christianity, or render it subservient to the dictates of party interest, he is getting a world upon his shoulders, with nothing to stand upon himself.

Every man should do what he can for himself and every other man, and thus raise the tone of public sentiment, advance the grand reforms of the age, and spread the leaven which alone can antidote the poison that already works fearfully in our body politic, and in social life, and is spreading wider and wider, by the unhallowed press, the unsanctified lecture, and the morbid zeal of the errorist and the fanatical.

That there is danger in our pathway, it is not our wish to conceal.

A traitor Guy Fawkes already lurks beneath the temple of our liberty, and is laying the train by which he hopes, with one fearful explosion, to scatter all our hopes to the four winds of heaven.

But his arm is withering in the accursed work! The Papacy must die! has been the recorded decree of Heaven, and is the demonstration of present tendencies. It is true, they vauntingly state, that they have here, 7 archbishops, 33 bishops, 1,704 priests, 31 colleges, 37 seminaries, and 117 female academies, and 2,000,000 adherents; but we well remember, that by the statistics of Catholic immigration, they should now have 4,000,000; and we ask, where have the 2,000,000 gone? They have been lost to Romanism in sixteen years! Yet 2,000,000 more are left; and they are not to be despised. Two million, in this land of the world's hope, who utterly repudiate the Bible as the instructor of the people, urged on by 1,744 men, trained to their work, and assisted in this infernal business by 185 educational institutions, must have an influence that will tell fearfully somewhere! But they are not alone! They are but

one detachment of the vast force that the Prince of Darkness has engaged in the grand crusade against revealed truth and human freedom.

Mormonism leads up her nearly half a million besotted votaries; Rationalism marshals her hundreds of thousands, and looks to Germany for fresh recruits continually; Socialism, all reeking from the sensual dens of French pollution, draws out her rank and file; Asiatic idolatry rears her temple on our western shore, and drills her thousands for the conflict; while the nameless "isms," which, like the frogs of Egypt, come up out of every river, and well, and pool, till the land is overrun-all these are armed for the affray. It is true, they are not all acting in concert, yet are they all laboring to destroy the truth! To have such disorganizing forces at work in the heart\* of our future nationthe Great West-just when our population is rapidly enlarging, our ministerial supply fearfully deficient, and a universal call for salvation from the four quarters of the world most urgent—is, to say the least, indicative of a fearful struggle yet to come.

<sup>\*&</sup>quot;The centre of our representative population has moved from forty-six miles north and twenty-two east of Washington, in 1790, to forty-seven north and seventy-one west in 1820, and is constantly traveling westward! In 1830, it was 108 miles west; and from 1830 to 1840, fifty-two miles—more than five miles per year. It is now, probably, in Ohio."—Stevens.

The way of the Lord is being prepared, as it has never been before since the apostles' days, if even then. In Asia, the vast population of China, Burmah, Siam, India, Persia, and Asia Minor are rapidly opening to the efforts of the friends of Christ. Japan has consented to tear down the mighty barriers to international intercourse, which have grown venerable for their antiquity, and has thus stepped upon the pathway of progress, which will end only in claiming her teeming millions as subjects of the Cross.

Africa already blooms with bright oases of hope and promise, in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cape Palmas, the Ashantee country, Egypt and Algeria, and the British possessions in the southern and southeastern parts of the continent.

The Sandwich, Society, and Fegee islands, and New Zealand, already live a new life, while Australia, a second giant empire, born almost in a day, points to a future of no ordinary interest.

In Europe, the truth is feeling a resurrection influence in Holland, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Hungary, and even in the cold, speculating, dream land, Germany, evangelism is raking up its long smothered fires, to burst forth again resistlessly, as in the days of the Reformation, while in skeptical, volatile France;\*

<sup>\*</sup> There are about 2,000,000 Protestants in France, and 9,000 clergymen. Thirty years ago, all, except say half a dozen, of the

degraded, priest-ridden Ireland, and tyrannized Belgium and Sardinia, truth is making her rightful conquests, and ringing out her battle-cry beneath the very walls of the Vatican. In Turkey, the proud Mussulman strokes his beard in contemplative despair, as he sees the audacious infidel (Christian) claiming equal rights, and hears of his own Sultan partaking the hospitality of the Saxon and the Frank; and recalls the prophetic record of his own Koran, declaring the downfall of his cherished system, and the extinguishment of his darling hopes.

In Canada, a glorious work is in progress among the Protestant population, and is winning the poor benighted Romanists by thousands to the purity of gospel hopes.

In South America, enough has been done to show that the gospel is a boon for her superstitious and degraded myriads, and possesses an emancipating power there as elsewhere. On our own Western shores, States are springing, as if by the magician's spell, from the reign of barbaric hordes to the grand developments of Freedom's institutions.

To them throng the representatives of almost every kingdom of the world to breathe the atmo sphere of Freedom, and catch the inspirations of progress, and receive the moulding influence of Chritianity for a time, and then return to relate to

ministers were rationalists, i. e., Deists. Now, half of them are evangelical.

crowds of gaping countrymen the wondrous stories of their experience! And, is there no God in this? Are there no seeds of futurity wrapped about by these strange realities? Verily, here as elsewhere, "Coming events cast their shadows before." Is there no meaning in the civil commotions which have placed the world's commercial highway across our continent in the hands of the adventurous filibusters?

We refrain from comments; but all these things are suggestive. The fields of earth are white to the harvest—Protestant America must nerve herself for the gleaning. Her geographical position; her wonderful history; her opening destiny; the spirit of her people; the leadings of Divine Providence, all point to her as the second "chosen people" of the Lord, to work out the mighty problem of human emancipation.

Eighteen hundred years ago the world might have been converted; but that favorable conjunction of circumstances passed away, and with it wandered off the world's hope, never to return till the second and last great era of opportunity should dawn. It has come? The nations are opening, the facilities are multiplying, the obstacles are removed.

The invention of printing has multiplied the power of speech a million-fold!\*

<sup>\* 600,000,000</sup> of the human race, now, have the Bible in their native tongue.

The application of steam to purposes of locomotion, as well as to the mechanical arts, has placed distant regions as it were in the same neighborhood; while the wonderful performances of the telegraph, will, at no distant day, enable the missionary to preach Jesus through electric wires, and to thousands, leagues away from his own station

Two of the most gigantic obstacles which have ever impeded the progress of the truth, are rapidly diminishing. Roman Catholicism and Mohammedanism are dying out.

In 1717 the number of Jesuits was 19,876, now 5,500. The Catholics in Canada have more than doubled their number in thirty years, while the Protestants have increased more than seven-fold!

In the United States, Rome has lost 2,000,000 in sixteen years. On the continent of America, fifty years ago, Catholics were as 17 to 4 Protestants; now Protestants are in the majority. In Catholic France, population has increased in the last fifty years, 15 per cent., and in Austria, 20 per cent., in Protestant Great Britain, the Protestant increase has been 100 per cent., and in Protestant Prussia 100 per cent. There have been 40,000 converts to Protestantism in the last twenty years, from the west of Ireland alone.

Out of 36,000,000 of French Catholics, only 2,000,000 go to confession. In 1790, the number

of priests (R. C.) in Paris was 5,000; since then the population has doubled; hence they should now number 10,000, they actually number 800!

300,000 left the Church of Rome during the excitement several years ago, about the Holy Coat, at Treves, in Austria, (most of them, probably, infidels, but anti-Catholics nevertheless). Spain had 53,000 nuns, but the instant they had a chance to escape 21,000 of them ran away.

The property of the nunneries and convents in Spain has been suppressed. In Rome there is a priest for every 70 people, and an ecclesiastical teacher, of some sort, for every 30 people. Yet, the Pope has mortgaged the sacred property of the Church, to pay soldiers to defend him against the love (?) of his own people. In Tuscany, ten years ago, there were 8,000 nuns, now only 2,000.

In Naples, fifty years ago, were 47,000 priests, now 27,000. Fifty years ago, 25,000 monks, now 8,000.

A writer in the National Magazine states in 1853—"Eighteen years ago Romanism was the only religion tolerated by law, in Texas! Now it has 30 churches, 25 priests, 6 literary institutions, and a population of 30,000, while Protestantism has 27,000 communicants (i. e., 12,000 Methodists, 8,090 Baptists, 6,000 Presbyterians, 1,000 Episcopalians), and about 300,000 adherents.

In Ireland 30,000 persons left the Catholic

Church in two years, and about one-third of the population is now Protestant.

Even now the Papacy is only upheld by French and Austrian bayonets. But the fatal decline is upon her. The wine of the wrath of the Almighty has been mingled for her, and she must drink it.

Her days are numbered. The half-suppressed voice of poor downtrodden Italy has been pleading with the God of justice! That God has heard its prayer! Her doom is sealed! It may delay for a little time, but it will only be to gather greater strength for the final rush, which will sweep the accursed system from the earth. God speed the day! She is drunken with the blood of saints. The pollution of her breath is a stench to the Almighty! Her abominations stir his arm for vengeance! Let it come; good God, stay not! let it come.

Her sister in iniquity too must die. The Crescent wanes, and the Mufti trembles for his law. In 1853, a Protestant book store was opened in Constantinople, and the Scriptures in twelve languages sold to the number of 10,000 copies, besides other good books. There are 65 Protestant preachers in Turkey, and 50 Protestant sermons are delivered every Sabbath in Constantinople. The Turks are generally willing to receive instruction, and the recent firman, by which the Sultan

has pledged religious liberty to his subjects, will without a doubt inaugurate a change in the religious prospects of that long benighted land, such as all Christian hearts will hail as a bright presage of the Messiah's reign.

Romanism or Protestantism is their only alternative? The last has the vantage ground, and she will retain it!

A Protestant was selling Bibles, and disposed of a large number to Turks and Jews. He was asked if he was not disturbed in his avocation. He replied: but one man had objected; and he proved to be a Catholic priest! We have reason to believe, that as Mohammedanism and Catholicism arose about the same time, so they will expire together; and prophecy teaches us to expect the restoration of the Jews to their ancient land, and the conversion of the world soon after. A remarkable change is now taking place among the Jews, almost everywhere. Multitudes are throwing aside the Mishna and the Talmud, and studying Moses and the prophets.

Their attention has been very generally turned to the subject of their restoration, and a society for that purpose now exists in London, and the Jewish paper openly advocates the measure. It is said also, that Mr. Noah, of New York, collected a million dollars for the purpose of rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem. A remarkable fact is, that

the Jews almost universally keep their property in such form as to be easily disposed of or removed. During the last 30 years, the Jews have been suffered for the first time in 1800 years to live in considerable numbers within the walls of their ancient capital. More conversions have occurred among them within the last 30 years than in 1800 before; and some of the most learned men in the universities of Germany are converted Jews; and they have begun to have a literature of their own. One in every sixty of the 15,000 Jewish converts in the world is a minister.

Dr. Duff stated (in 1853) at a meeting of the General Assembly of the Free Church in Scotland, "That, last autumn, for the first time since the destruction of Jerusalem, 'the latter rain' had returned to the Holy Land."

Now, when we contemplate these facts in connection with those pertaining to the declining systems of Turk and Catholic, and those relating to our own land, and view all in the light of the following prophecies—how cheering the prospect:—

## - Isaiah lxi. 4.

"They shall build the old wastes,
They shall raise up the former desolations,
And shall repair the waste cities,
The desolation of many generations."

### Ezekiel xxxiv. 10, 13, 28.

"Thus saith the Lord God:

Behold, as a shepherd searcheth out his flock

In the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered;

So will I seek out my sheep,

And will deliver them from all places whither they have been scattered.

And I will bring them out from the people,

And gather them from the countries,

And will bring them to their own land,

And feed them upon the mountains of Israel.

And I will set up one shepherd over them

And he shall feed them,

Even my servant, David;

He shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd."

### Ezekiel xxxvii. 21, 24, 25.

"I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone,

And will gather them on every side,

And bring them unto their own land.

And David, my servant, shall be King over them,

And they shall have one Shepherd;

And they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob, my servant,

Wherein your fathers have dwelt,

And they shall dwell therein for ever;

And my servant David-shall be their Prince for ever."

# Isaiah xlix. 14-23.

"Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands;

Thy walls are continually before me.

Thy children shall make haste;

Thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing:

The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, The excellency of Carmel and of Sharon. Violence shall no more be heard in their land, Wasting nor destruction within their borders;

But they shall call their walls Salvation, and their gates

The people, also, shall be all righteous; And they shall inherit the land for ever. I, the Lord, will hasten it in his time."

Now place all these facts together-

Access to the world of men; two of the greatest systems of error that have ever cursed the world, in their dotage; Protestantism everywhere springing up with new life; the long-predicted restoration of the Israelites—an event associated with the final triumph of Messiah—just on the eve of fulfillment, and just at this juncture a nation rising here, away from the effete systems of the old world—free from their corruptions—palpitating with the fires of Evangelism, and swaying an influence, in the world, paramount to all others!\* What does it mean? But lest the last remarks should be questioned, I add a slip from the British Quarterly Review which is worthy of attention:

\* Of 150 male Missionaries who have gone to China, 88 were from this country, 47 from England, and 15 from the continent of Europe.

"Tried by the numerical measure of population, they are already on a par with Great Britain, and will soon leave it behind. Even Russia, with its fifty millions, must regard America as a full-grown nation. Again, tried by the test of exports and imports—that is, of commercial necessity to the rest of the world—the United States hold a place with the first. Further, if we make military and naval prowess the test of cosmopolitical importance, America will stand second to none. She has already, in the past, given sufficient proof of her capacities for fighting, both by sea and land; and, if it be not admitted that the Americans are superior to the English at sea, it is at least certain that the despotic powers of the old world would be more charv of insulting the star-spangled banner than of insulting the flag of England. A Yankee captain, indeed, is notoriously the most terrible thing going; and chips of the American block generally, though they are recognized everywhere as the most braggart and irreverent of the sons of men, are recognized also as the most dangerous to be locked up or called in question for anything they say or do. But in the application of science to social uses, in industrial invention, and generally in such exercises of the intellect as give a country practical eminence among the nations of the world, they have already an acknowledged superiority. The very thing that most of all gives a country cosmopolitical importance, is its ability to furnish, out of its own experience, answers to the questions that chance at the moment to be of the greatest social interest to other countries, or to exhibit going on within its bosom processes and experiments, the issue of which is not yet clear perhaps even to itself, but which are curious, novel, and suggestive in their nature.

"For example, the entire political system of America is a practical solution of the great problem, everywhere important, of the reconciliation of local self-government with federation. The question of national defenses without standing armies is also set in a new light to us by the militia system of America; while the question of the competence of a people to act on the

aggressive without standing armies, also receives light from the experience of America in volunteer enterprises. A hundred such examples might be given of points of great social interest, on which America may be said to have fully made up its mind, while the other nations are still only bungling in the dark."

Now, after this testimony to our influence, I ask again, what do all these things mean? and I answer, they mean that this entire nation should be so inspired with the vitalizing elements of Evangelism as to stand before the world a Missionary Empire. In no other way can our high destiny be realized. We may extend the area of freedom and multiply the institutions of liberty, but it will be only to enlarge the field of anarchy, and spread the withering curse of fitful revolutions, unless a pure Protestantism impart its conserving influences.

Civil liberty and Bible religion are inseparable! They were joined by God himself in perpetual wedlock, and they who dare to separate them, but in experiment, shall find that, though they be sundered, it will only be to dig the grave of liberty. "It has been the freely expressed opinion of mere politicians of France and other parts of Europe, that the great obstacle to free institutions in France is the want of Christian influence and morals."

Now, we assert that what is needed to meet the demands of the age is an enlarged Liberality, and a deep Spirituality! The first may be measurably secured without the preceding influence of the last,

but it can never stretch its benefactions to embrace all its legitimate objects, until fully imbued with the consecrating element of the baptism of the Holy Ghost! The deep Spirituality which is emphatically the need of the times only can eradicate all the natural depravity of the heart, and enable the soul to swing loose from earthly attachments, and devote itself freely and fully to the works of Evangelism.

No sentiment, no plan, no effort, can avail in the absence of this, for the simple reason that this alone takes hold of the essential condition of human progress (heart purity) and with every fresh triumph multiplies its resources and strengthens its defenses!

The gospel is the great and, in an important sense, the only civilizer. Legislation cannot civilize—education cannot, unless it be based upon Christian principles. India, Ireland and the Sandwich Islands are proofs.

But we want means also, and the God of goodness has placed them at our command in an increasing ratio with every fresh triumph of our principles.

When the Christian element shall have so pervaded the nations that wars shall cease, an untold amount of resources will be at the service of Evangelism. The war of American Independence cost the English nation \$512,709,095. The French war, from 1793 to 1802, cost them \$1,475,528,325.

The French war, terminating in 1815, cost them \$1,679,915,820, making a total of \$3,668,153,240, that Protestant England alone has spent in three wars. It is said that the Eastern war, just closed, has cost her \$200,000,000 more.

The amount thus expended in her four wars above noticed, at the rate that the Moravians support their missionary stations, by \$857 per station and four missionaries, would sustain 4,513,597 missionary stations, and 18,054,388 missionaries; equal to one missionary for every 55 persons on the globe! A table cut from the N. Y. Daily Times for April 8th, 1856, will place this subject in a clearer light. The only comment that it needs is the single inquiry, how much might the Protestant nations, England, Prussia, and America, do for Christ, could this war spirit be displaced by a true Evangelism? This is the work of Christianity, and she will do it! yes, so sure as Jehovah reigns she will do it. But to the table:—

## COMPARATIVE BURDENS OF NATIONS.

In a foregoing article, we have seen to what extent the revenues of the principal nations of Christendom are mortgaged, as it were, to the past, or appropriated to the interest of their public debts. But these debts, vast as they are, do not represent all the burdens entailed by the past upon the present generation. They are nearly all the products of war—a system which, through the armed-peace policy, imposes an additional load, of almost equal weight, upon the people; for the preparations for future wars cost several great nations nearly as much annually, as they once expended in

actual conflict with hostile powers. Both of these burdens are virtually the legacies of the past and its policy. It may be instructive to put them in the scale against all the other expenditures of different governments. In doing this, it would be calling things only by their right names if we denominate the interest of these public debts a charge for wars past, and the annual cost of military armaments an expenditure for wars prospective. All the other expenses are put under the head of civil government. We subjoin these items as they may be found in the returns for 1854:

		1	ENG	LAN	ND.						
											Expenditures.
Wars past, .											\$133,089,412
Wars Prospective,											117,984,201
Civil Government,				•							30,668,107
Total,				19.0							\$281,741,720
			FR	ANCI	E.						
Wars Past, .											\$76,128,652
Wars Prospective,											85,152,033
Civil Government,											129,929,640
Total,											\$291,210,325
		1	LUS	TRI	Α.						
Wars Past, .											\$32,073,201
Wars Prospective,									٠		53,744,596
Civil Government,	,			٠				٠		٠	55,283,299
Total, .			٠				٠				\$141,101,096
	U.	NIT	ED	STA	<b>LT</b> F	ES.					
Wars Past, .								٠			\$3,071,016
Wars Prospective,											22,501,822
Civil Government,										•	28,516,000
Total,			٠								\$54,088,264

	PRUSSIA.	Expenditures.
Wars Past,		\$7,804,041
Wars Prospective,		20,184,508
Civil Government,		49,764,297
Civil Government,		
Total,		\$77,752,846
	HOLLAND.	
Wars Past, .		\$14,483,793
Wars Prospective,		. 6,421,996
Civil Government,		7,375,694
Total.		\$28,281,483

"The foregoing statistics show what a large proportion of the revenues of the leading nations is swallowed up in expenditures for wars past and prospective. These two items absorbed \$251,073,613 of the public income of Great Britain in 1854; while all the expenses of the civil government amounted to only \$30,668,107. Thus the war-system devours, even in time of peace, seven-eighths of the revenue of a nation that professes to be the most civilized and Christian in the world! These two heads of war-expenditure cost France, in 1854, \$161,280,685 of its entire revenue, which was \$291,210,325; they cost Austria \$85,817,797 out of \$141,101,096; Prussia, \$27,988,549 out of \$77,752,846; Holland, \$20,905,789 out of \$28,281,483; and the United States \$25,572,838 out of \$54,088,264.

"Here are the six most commercial, wealthy, and enlightened nations of the earth spending in one year \$572,639,271 on wars past and prospective! As the ass in Scripture crouched between two burdens, so the people of European Christendom are bending to the ground beneath these two dead-weights, saddled upon their shoulders by the war-system. And, what seems to aggravate their misfortune, the burden grows heavier from year to year. With the exception of the United States, all the nations of the civilized world, instead of diminishing, seem to be increasing their public debts, and also their annual expenditures for military and naval armaments."

God's voice to the Church has been thus briefly suggested. The summary of the whole is, claim the Gift of Power—the special influences of the Holy Spirit! Nothing else can enable the church to seize the spirit and tendencies of the age with moulding power! Nothing else can prepare her to enter the open doors, and strike home, fatally, to the very heart of Romanism, Mohammedanism, and Heathenism!

Nothing else can banish the insane war policy from Protestant governments, and turn its immense expenditures into the treasury of benevolence. This can do it. It can do it by swaying public sentiment, and by lifting its own voice authoritatively, in all the political assemblages of the nations! It can do it by the creation of proper sentiments, by the agency of its pulpit, and its press. It can do it, because it must be done before the world can be saved, and God has appointed this power to effect the work!



## CHAPTER VI.

HOW SHALL THIS GIFT BE OBTAINED?

THE question admits of two answers, according to the character of the inquirer.

If you are a faithful, zealous Christian, claim it by an act of appropriating faith. It is yours by promise. For he is "more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," etc. Yours by implication. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Yours by design and duty. It is your duty to glorify God, and fulfill his will concerning you. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit," and "I have chosen you and ordained you to bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

If you are merely a professor, or one who has not habitually performed every known duty, your course is, first of all, to follow the intimations of the Spirit. He may suggest a closet forsaken, a class neglected, a friend unwarned, a difficulty with a fellow-Christian unsettled, an enemy unforgiven, a hard speech unrepented of, a wrong not atoned for, an injury improperly resented, an appetite un-

warrantably indulged, a family altar in ruins, some vow unpaid, a prohibited indulgence, an undue deference to the opinions of the world, a forbidden conformity with the fashions and spirit of the world, some interdicted amusement, the good old Bible all dust-covered and neglected, some demand of benevolence unhonored, etc.

I repeat, follow the intimations of the Spirit. Wherever they may lead you, follow them; whatever self-denial it may demand, make it; to whatever ridicule, or persecution, or inconvenience it may subject you, welcome it. But everywhere, at all times, under all circumstances, as you value your peace, your life, your eternal all, go where the Spirit leads, do what the Spirit bids you. And never falter; for "unstable as water, thou shalt not excel:" and "he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

The Holy Spirit is the efficient agent in man's salvation, and all the means to it. In Humanity's name, then, cherish it; in Humanity's name, then, go on. A world of immortal intelligences groan in sin—a remedy is at hand, and heaven urges the application—make it, Christian, make it!

The great cloud of witnesses behold thy life, and are ready to make the blue arch ring with joyful plaudits, if you come home triumphantly, crowned, and robed, and palmed. Up, then, Christian! up! gird thyself for life's stern conflicts!

The sound of conflict is abroad; haste, then, to mingle in the strife! Let no mere earthly motive chain thee now! Spurn from you the glittering seductions of sordid vanity, and the beseeching tones of slothful ease frown down, and away to the battle-field. It is no time to parley. While you deliberate, the devil will have circumvented your desires, and blasted your hopes, and wrought out the ruin of a soul. He is not omniscient, but is too sagacious not to profit by your hesitancy. While you falter, and estimate probabilities, and calculate results, he will have fortified his position, and be fully provided against your attempt. But if to conviction you add instant and decided action, you may take the enemy by surprise, and gain much, before he can rally his influences to oppose you successfully. Some may think that this is viewing the matter too much in a human light; but I answer, if we would treat the devil as a great finite intelligence, instead of investing him with attributes of infinity, and then would bring the philosophy of human life to bear upon the subject, we would find encouragement many times, while now we only find despair.

Heed not the deceitful sophism that assures you that you would do if you were in a sphere of enlarged opportunities and extended usefulness. Remember that an ardent and glowing piety will wear its own channels, and define its own courses.

Secure the piety and the usefulness will follow. In the words of Steward, "The charter of conquest belongs only to an *earnest* Christianity." Be in earnest where you are.

The coral mountains never would have been formed, had not each little insect worked away in his humble sphere, and toiled earnestly at his task. What if each little one had said, "We are away down here, 1,500 feet below the surface of the water; surely we can never lift our coral home up yonder"—would those rocks and islands ever have had a being? No, no; they toiled on, and, though generations lived and worked and died, the work went on, till hundreds of miles of towering reefs attested their success. So we may live and die, but we are each adding our cell to the glorious mountain, which is to fill the whole earth.

Ministers have a peculiar interest in these things. The responsibilities of the ministry are augmenting every year. Claims, unheard of in the record of the past, come with all their babbling tongues, and each vehemently urges its separate plea, and all take time. The Missionary, Tract, Sunday School, Bible causes, all have their interests, and the minister is expected to stand foremost in their support. The various reforms, temperance, educational, fiscal, and social, call his attention and tax his energies. In addition to all this, the progressive intelligence of the masses imposes upon him the

necessity for constant study, in order to keep in advance of the growing intellect around him.

Scientific truths have become so familiar, and withal its skepticism is so bold, that he must go with the scientific investigator into every field of experiment, to turn every new fact toward Calvary; or, at least, to preserve it from the warping power of a doubting speculativeness, or a fraudulent philosophy.

Added to all this is the fearful fact, that the time to labor for any one given case is fearfully curtailed. Men live so fast, that the time of their impressibility is short. We live down more privileges, and abuse more grace now in ten years, than our fathers did in thirty. Hence, we grow old in unbelief, and callous in feeling, almost with the glow of youth upon our cheek. Hence, he who would win souls to Christ must labor faithfully. One hour's delay, and the favorable moment may be past; one day's procrastination, and the promising conjunction of circumstances is gone, and away in the whirl of life goes the object of our solicitude, and leaves us to the painful contemplation of our recreancy and his doom. O, if ever God's ministers needed to be endowed with a tireless spirit and an unflagging energy, it is now.

Would that the earnest cry might go up from the Church of Christ, "O Lord, revive thy work!" "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

"We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost!" Come then, O God, and breathe upon thy Church, and say, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

It must be sought in the use of all the means. No degree of desire for this will atone for neglect of the means of grace! All must be attended, faithfully, cheerfully, prayerfully!

It must be sought expectantly! O how God-dishonoring is our unbelief!

What! Dare to question the faithfulness of our heavenly Father? A faithfulness, too, which stands pledged to accomplish the purposes of infinite love and compassion! No—No—No! "Let my right hand forget her cunning, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," but never, never, let me doubt the promises of God! But, remember, a "clean heart" is its prerequisite! "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Think you that they were not justified when this promise was made? And what did the "coming of the Holy Ghost upon them" import, but the sanctification of their natures by his power? This was his first work, followed by his extraordinary and miraculous influences.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE.

The history of the Israelites may be regarded as the exponent of the principles of the Divine administration in all ages, both civilly and ecclesiastically. In that history we find obedience invariably rewarded with all the immunities and blessings which were promised as a consequence of faithfulness, and disobedience as inseparably connected with all the deprivation and miseries denounced upon unfaithfulness. We need not specify instances; every Bible reader will at once recall examples which illustrate our position. The same is true in reference to the Church under the gospel dispensation.

The principles of all dispensations are the same, however various the order of development may be!

As long as the Church was faithful, prosperity attended upon her footsteps, brightened her days, and filled her hours with the richest delights.

When the chill of decaying piety had placed her in the path of retrogressive experience, the ghostly shapes of retributive evil gathered around her, till, grieved by neglect and imposition, the guardian spirit of her purity took his flight and left her the sport of the stern realities which she had so recklessly evoked, like the prophetic spirit of the ancient Samuel, to rebuke her folly. The long, dreary night of ages which followed, during the rise and progress of the papal power, proves but too clearly that our God is a jealous God, and his honor will He not give to another.

And when again she took her exodus from that land of bondage, and clung with filial affection to her Lord, how soon did the returning smiles of his providence cheer her on again, in her pilgrimage o'er the earth.

Thus has it ever been. Church history has recorded, side by side, upon every page the two great facts: Obedience reaps its reward; disobedience finds its penalty! And in doing so she but reaffirms the anticipated decision of sound reason, and the testimony of individual experience. Our reason itself, perverted and feeble as it is, teaches us that the great reason of the Infinite which makes all laws, and controls all administrations, must be unchangeable, and must have connected effect with cause in such things as well as in all things else.

We see volition acting as cause in other things, and therefore expect it to occupy the same position in the moral world. To all this, experience—the

unquestionable witness who reasons not, and demonstrates not, but rises above all reasoning and all demonstration, and sets the seal of consciousness to all her testimony—experience, gathering her troops of recollections from the past, marshals them all within the heart, whence they pour forth their united verdict: Obedience reaps its own reward; disobedience finds its certain penalty! Well would it be if the truth were engraven in characters of light upon all our sanctuaries, and the rising generation were taught to spell out, as their first rudimental lesson, the pregnant words one by one, till they should be daguerreotyped upon the plates of memory, as indestructibly as her own nature.

O that the Holy Spirit would descend and impress this truth upon every mind, till it should stand as the sure guardian of his interests, and with the influence of the Ark of the Covenant at the house of Obed-Edom, shed over all its experience the cheering emotions of covenant prosperity!

Then how glorious would be the consequences! We need wealth, we need influence, we need faith, love, hope, zeal, consistency; but first of all, and most of all, we need the vivifying, transforming, out-bursting influences of the Holy Ghost. Without them we may be Sampsons indeed, but Sampsons shorn of our strength—cheerless and sightless, subject to the jibes and jeers of a scoffing world With it we may lay hold upon the central posts of

the temple of idolatry and iniquity, and it shall fall beneath our power!

Let this sentiment be but once embodied in the practical desires of the Church, and who can estimate its glorious results?

It would breathe into the services of the sanctuary a fresher unction and a mightier energy; it would sweep in resurrection power all through the valley of dry bones, and they would come bone to his bone, till from the four winds would come the breath which should breathe upon the slain and they should live. It would transform every church member into a faithful Caleb or a believing Joshua, to sustain the uplifted hands of God's own legates, as they command the hosts of Israel to battle and to victory! It would go to the chamber of sickness, and breathe a fragrance as of paradise from the fruits of the tree of life, and the dews of the water of the river of life, all around the fevered brow, and over the throbbing heart, till its wild heavings should sink to rest, and the gentle pulsations of returning health should steal through the languid frame, and plant its glowing ensign again upon the brow!

It would go to the bed of death, and clothe the dying hour in the gorgeous drapery of immortal visions, and hang around the gloom of the grave the festooned chaplets of heaven's pure hopes!

It would walk through the trying scenes of life

with the mien of a heavenly visitant, while on every hand, as from the lap of Spring, it would scatter the fragrant buds of joy to bloom in immortal blessedness.

Let the ministry claim it, and baptized heralds shall go forth burning with love as pure and quenchless as the ethereal fires of heaven, inspired with a zeal as fervent as the galvanic flame, and emitting an effulgence as clear and stainless as the sun-born beams of day.

Let the membership find it, and, inflamed with its divinity, millions of circles of light and influence shall burst upon the night-bound earth, and with concentrated rays shall illuminate its darkest cavern, till from every human habitation shall go pealing up the blue concave the mighty doxology of humanity redeemed, the nations regenerated, and Messiah's final triumphant song.

Let the class-leader find it, and with its energizing influence stand before his members to talk of the good things of the kingdom, or search for them at their homes, and how the backslidden would melt down, and the cold-hearted resolve, and the earnestly pious catch a fresh inspiration, and plume their wings for a loftier flight. Let the editor and the writer receive it, and how would every page of church literature glow with the fervor of exalted love and flash with the coruscations of sanctified intellect. Like an angel of

compassion it would go to the poor, desolate, and mourning Zion, exalt her downcast head, and shout, "Sing, O daughter of Zion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem, for thy redemption draweth nigh." Envy would shrink abashed; Dissension would seek her home in the dens of earth; Anger would gasp in dying agonies; Unbelief would bleed at every pore; Avarice and all ungodliness would rush from such an atmosphere of purity, as from heaven's own portals, and God, the mighty God of Jacob, would unfurl his banners and call up his sacramental host to glorious triumph.

It would surround the tempted, feeble, halting ones, with a band of sympathizing friends who, by the might of their own power, would lift up the head that hangs down and confirm the feeble knees. It would throw before the erring one, in his pathway of folly, the mighty obstacle of a convicting faith, and cast upon him the twining lasso of fraternal love.

It would impart a sacred charm to the very name of Christianity, that would cause the eager eyes of youthful household circles to look longingly forth, as the lark for the morning, that they might pour their richest treasury of life's young songs into her listening ear, and even draw back the wistful gaze of the callous worldling as he passes away to his darkness-home.

It would shed through all the earth the bright effulgence of the Sun of Righteousness, and cast the

shadow of the Cross athwart the pathway of her teeming myriads.

It would . . . but what would it not do for God and humanity?

O that his Spirit might seal the truth upon the inmost soul! The voice of God sounds out, loud, and clear, and long—Arise, O Israel! The land is before thee. Go up, and possess it, and my presence shall be with thee!

"Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.
Trav'ler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See the glory-beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of hope or joy foretell?
Trav'ler, yes, it brings the day—
Promised day of Israel.

"Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Trav'ler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth, its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams, alone,
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Trav'ler, ages are its own—
See, it bursts o'er all the earth!

"Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Trav'ler, darkness takes its flight;
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wandering cease;
Hie thee to thy quiet home.
Trav'ler, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come!"



## APPENDIX.

"In like manner, also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."—I Tim. ii. 9, 10.

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price."—I Peter iii. 3, 4.

The foundation of man's obligations to love and serve his Creator, was, in the first place, found in the facts of creation and preservation. In view of these, God claimed all that he was, and all that he possessed. The great law—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," etc., though not formally declared, was the summary of his obligations, and the extent of his duties. But after his fall, the great plan of recovery, devised and promised by the Father, contemplated man in new and singular relations. The obligations growing out of creation and preservation were still binding; but, in addition to their claims, another was laid, in the fact of redemption, which demanded some peculiar and specific recognition. That recognition we find in the minor laws which characterize

the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not that they con tain anything essentially different from the first great commandment, but are more properly express statutes, regulating the observance of that, in particular respects. They all rest upon the common basis—the right of God, as our Redeemer, to institute such regulations as He may think proper, for the government of his blood-bought creatures. Thus, says the Apostle: "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price;" revealing, in this single sentence, the great reason of the gospel administration, and its justification.

"Shall He not do what he will with His own?" has now an essential propriety, which is heightened by all the immense considerations of redemption. The passages at the commencement of this article are of the class to which we refer; and with the basis, which we have claimed for such minor laws, they cannot be unimportant. Their demands are designed to meet an important principle of our nature. Selfishness and pride, in their various forms, are the besetting sins of mankind, and of the Church at the present time, and these demands strike at their very roots. While their prohibitions forbid their external development, their positive injunctions require a disposition which will effectually exclude their existence.

The love of dress and display has reached a point of ruinous extravagance, which threatens totally to annihilate the simplicity of gospel life. So gigantic has the evil already become, that it has enthroned itself in the hearts of the children of God, and converted the domestic altar and the public sanctuary into shrines for its own offerings. Its despotic power has sealed the pulpit and the press; and he who dares to denounce its unhallowed usurpation, is sure to meet an anathema more to be dreaded than to the ignorant Catholic is that which issues from the papal throne. So sensitive is the public mind, that upon the first mention of the subject, preparation is instantly made to treat it with ridicule, or indignantly to repel it as an encroachment upon the sacred rights of Christian liberty. But why is this? Such conduct usually presupposes something wrong. Let us, then, lay aside all prejudice, and examine the subject with the candor which its importance merits.

Let me here be distinctly understood as disclaiming all desire to banish all those distinctions in the external appearance which the conventionalities of social life have created, on the contrary, I admire the inventions of art, and the decorations of a pure taste, but it is the excessive exhibition of those particular developments of pride and selfishness, prohibited in the Scriptures referred to, to which I object, and against which is directed the present effort.

I object to this exhibition:

1st. Because it is irrational, and a remnant of barbarism! All uncivilized tribes exhibit the passion in its excessive development. We, the boasting lords and ladies of this brightest era of the world's history, and the period of man's highest exaltation, yet servilely imitate their example, daguerreotype their passion, and vie with them in their extravagance of folly. What more humiliating spectacle than to see the fairest of God's creation endeavoring to increase their charms by the borrowed lustre of the trinkets of barbarians! Looking at the rationality of the thing, I hardly know which could claim the preference, the ridiculous custom of the élite of the South Sea Islanders, of hanging huge pieces of bone by an aperture in the nose, or the more refined one of our own fair damsels, of boring the ears in order to suspend weights of shining gold.

2d. Because it is only perverted taste that commends them! I know that it is said "God has given us the beautiful to enjoy, and since these things are beautiful we may enjoy them." I answer, everything, beautiful in a certain sense, may not be enjoyed.

An obscene picture may be beautiful as a picture, but shall we therefore adorn our walls with it? There is a moral element in all true beauty, and when that element is wanting, or is wrong, there is no true beauty in the thing; and none that may be enjoyed. In jewelry, as such, there is not one particle of beauty! The material of which it is composed may be beautiful, the artistic skill displayed in its construction may be beautiful, but the article as an instrument of adornment is not, because the moral element is wholly wanting or totally wrong! There may

be a kind of intellectual beauty in it, it is true; but as the intellectual is only made for the moral, so intellectual beauty is only preparatory to moral beauty, and considered alone as imperfect, and not true beauty. The taste is adapted and designed by the Creator to view the first only in and for the last; and therefore it is, in a certain sense, a vitiated taste that will approve of that which is only intellectually beautiful. In view of this we may lay this down as an axiom. The truly beautiful is always useful! The illustration already used will serve to make this subject still clearer. An obscene book or painting, may be intellectually beautiful, i. e., the paper may be of the finest quality, the binding superb, the canvas may be fine, and the colors rich and mellow, and laid on with perfect precision, and all this is pleasing or intellectually beautiful, but is the picture or the book as such beautiful? No! Why? Because its moral tendency is bad. It is not really beautiful, then, because it is not useful, or, in other words, the moral element is wanting. For further proof, look at the sculptures of the best artists that the world has ever seen, which stand confessedly as the models of a pure taste, and specimens of genuine beauty. Do we find them enveloped in such meretricious aids to beauty? Never! Every one feels as he gazes upon them that such trappings would mar the whole. No! the statuary which enchains a world's admiration is never adorned in the glittering gewgaws of modern sentimentalism! Besides, and as a fact,

in striking contrast with this, and one, too, which speaks volumes-how are the figures adorned in those paintings which are hung up in certain places, which shall be nameless, on purpose to excite the passions, and inflame the imagination of the unwary? Yes, and how are the living originals of those pictures attired when they issue forth to consummate their deeds of darkness? A word to the wise is sufficient. When angels are depicted, it is always in the modest sweetness of female attractiveness, or in the noble beauty of manhood in its purity, but never adorned with the glittering tinsel of imaginary beauty. Again, God never prohibits the truly beautiful to man. Throughout the whole gospel, not an instance can be named where He has forbidden the useful or the beautiful, yet these are forbidden; the conclusion then is irresistible, they are neither useful nor beautiful.

3d. Because an habitual attention to them enervates the mind, and unfits it for life's stern responsibilities. We need not here enlarge upon the principles upon which this proposition is founded, but make our appeal to general facts, within the compass of every person's observation. It is well known that those most addicted to the use of ornaments are of a light and airy turn of mind, and are too much engrossed with such trifles to regard as they ought the more serious concerns of life. The last plays, or the opera, or the cotillion party, or the levee, or the fashions, or the last novel, form the substance of their

conversation and their thoughts. Nor from the principles of mind can it well be otherwise; for the passion, naturally strong enough, has been fostered by indulgence, till it sways the mind with a species of intoxicating power, almost perfect in its control. To this it will not do to reply that, "they are thought so little of, they cannot produce such effects," for stubborn fact still testifies against them. If they are such slight objects of thought, why spend so much time in arranging them? Why always be so very sure, before appearing in the street, parlor, or church, to bring the ear-rings forward, so that the headdress may not conceal them? And why be so very particular to adjust the bracelet, so as to have it seen to the best advantage? And why so very careful (carelessly) to place the arm in the most conspicuous position? These are not evidences of a want of thought, and any person who thinks enough of them to do so to any extent, regards them sufficiently to insure the mental consequences stated.

4th. It tends directly to engender vanity, and deprave the heart! The tendency of anything may be best understood, by considering an extreme case as an illustration. Dress up a little girl for the first time in fine attire, and adorn her with all the ornaments of our grown-up daughters, and you will have a specimen of the ridiculous pomposity of childish vanity. But why are the affected strut, and labored gait, and fulsome airs so ridiculous? Simply because it is native vanity, acting itself out, with-

out the restraints which social life throws around those of more mature years. But in either case, the vanity is there, as the endless twists, and turns, and adjustments which the mirror of the dressing-chamber beholds, can testify. As truly as indulgence feeds desire, does this practice increase the native vanity that first prompted to it. But serious in the light of the future as is this consideration, is it also true that it depraves the heart? It must, as a natural consequence of the foregoing. But there is another and more direct way, in which it accomplishes the same result, viz.: By stooping so low as to attempt to seduce the admiration, which, perhaps, personal charms might not win, or to point and render more fatal those at present sufficiently dangerous. When vice allures most successfully, it is when decorated with the trappings of luxurious vanity; and when virtue is most strongly tempted, it is when its outward semblance takes its hue from the same medium. To be at so much pains to court the empty adulation of fops or fools, is, in itself, degrading enough, but when its influence is an offering upon the shrine of lustful pride, it becomes all to consider it well. Again. unfounded contempt, or unmerited scorn is always depraving. But nothing tends more than the use of these adornments to engender such feelings in the soul, when brought in contact with those who cannot, or will not do the same.

5th. It creates a spirit of extravagance which must,

sooner or later, prove ruinous! If jewelry is worn, the whole dress must correspond. If the decorations are cx pensive, the fabric must be on an equality. No sooner is an addition made to the ornaments than a corresponding advance upon the value of the whole attire must ensue. The consequence is, many ladies wear a small fortune upon their persons. This stimulates the less wealthy to imitate their example, in order to be eligible to the same society; and thus on, down through all ranks, spreads the destructive influence; and the result is seen in the discouraged fathers, care-worn or bankrupt husbands, speculating beaux, and the general monetary pressure of the times. To the patriot and philanthropist, these are considerations of fearful moment. If the past has lessons of instruction for us, we may find, in the close connection existing between opulence, the love of display and extravagance, and the rapid decline of national character and strength, in Babylon, Tyre, Sparta, Rome, Spain, etc., the beacon which would warn us of the reefs upon which they were wrecked. This single evil is doing more to undermine our institutions, curtail our benevolence, and limit the salvation of the gospel, than all other causes combined. Thus far, we have only urged reasons which naturally occur to the mere moralist. It becomes us now to press home the subject to the Christian conscience, by stating others of peculiar significance to that character. The Christian should abandon or avoid the practice. 1st. Because it is

inconsistent with his profession. The child of God professes to have "come out from the world," crucified "its affections and desires," "put off the old man with his deeds;" that he is "dead to the world," and that he has "put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness." Now, what greater inconsistency can there be, than for one who makes such a profession to exhibit every mark of the basest subjection to the god of this world. "But those who make the highest professions practice it, and why may not I?" Ah! the withering curse of such examples! I know they do it, and I know, too, that by doing it, they are laying up for themselves bitter pangs of sorrow, when they learn the truth. Sin is sin, though it be surrounded by every virtue; and inconsistency is marked, though it be veiled by a thousand graces. Who has not heard utterances of astonishment from those who have listened to such high professors, as they have proclaimed the simple and humbling truths of gospel salvation, while decked in their livery of gold, and gems, and costly array? I have known those who stood as confessed ornaments of the Church, and who loved to proclaim the glorious doctrine of Christian holiness, to labor to persuade others to strive for higher attainments. And I have heard such whispered exclamations from those who listened, as totally annihilated all good impressions, and evidenced the power with which the conviction of their inconsistency was forced upon the

mind. "Why, she thinks just as much of dress as any one else," has been the death-knell of all hope of good from such efforts. Never! and I would utter it with all possible emphasis, never will that heaven-sent doctrine accomplish its glorious work, till its own professors shall disrobe themselves of the whole paraphernalia of earth's adornments, and permit holy principle to be exemplified by pure example.

Here we are met with the plea, "But it is fashionable." As if the Christian must follow the dictates of fashion, however opposed to gospel principles, and into whatever labyrinth of inconsistency the fickle goddess may lead. Fashion, in the estimation of many, seems a kind of magic crucible, which possesses ample power to transmute whatever may come within its influence into the very gold of righteousness. So that, whatever principle may be sacrificed in the pursuit of her gaudy bubbles, it is all right, because, forsooth, "it is the fashion." Away with such morality as this! It is the moral code of the arch enemy himself! and yet it is the main reason given, by a great portion of those who profess the religion of the Cross, for violating as plain and express a command as can be found in the Bible. "Is it not right, then, (says one) to follow the fashion?" Here the question arises, How far is it the Christian's duty to follow the customs and fashions of the world? Mark the phraseology! It is not how far may he thus conform, etc.; but

how far is it his duty to conform, etc. We have purposely put the question in this form, that we may be able better to meet a wide-spread and destructive sentiment, and a sophism of the adversary, which is doing fearful execution with Christian consistency.

This "may do," or "may not do," covers a wide field in the estimation of many. They seem to have the idea that God has left a large portion of the trifling affairs of life optional! But in his sight, there is never a may without a MUST! In other words, nothing is left strictly optional. Everything is stern, unyielding duty, one way or the other. In reference to everything, it must be said, it is our duty to do, or it is our duty not to do. There is no neutral ground, which the Christian may occupy or not, and be equally innocent in either case. If we may innocently do, it is our duty to do, and our guilt if we do not, and vice versa.

How far, then, is it our duty to conform to the customs and fashions of the world? Ans.: As far as we can in things strictly indifferent, and when no compromise of principle is involved. Further than this no one can innocently go under any pretense. If we adopt any other conclusion than this, there will be no landmarks left. The whole field will be open to the caprice of every one, with no simits, and no safeguards: for if we say that principle may be violated at all, every one will be at liberty to say how far he may violate it; and thus it may be carried

from one degree of transgression to another, till the whole principle is swept away.

No sacrifice of principle is ever necessary for usefulness; for consistency is the very soul of usefulness.

Another reason, nearly akin to the one just considered, is, "I wear them because others do." As if companionship in iniquity possessed a purifying tendency. If five hundred men combine together to pillage and steal, is it any the less sin for each, than if he alone were guilty? If so, then the quickest way to annihilate sin in our world is to all be as bad as we can, so that the large number of transgressors may make us all innocent in transgression.

But can the prevalence of any wrong justify its commission? We answer, It can, if it can change its nature, and make wrong right, otherwise it cannot! But all wrong is some transgression of a Divine law; and whether the transgressions be few or many, each one is transgression still. Wrong is wrong at all times, and under all circumstances. And "every transgression and disobedience will receive its just recompense of reward." If a multitude of transgressions can absolve us from the duty of obedience, the wonder is that the whole world has not long ago received complete absolution from all duty, and all law become obsolete. But "thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil," is the caution of Wisdom, and the counsel of safety.

Others sav. "It is well enough for those who make a high profession to avoid them; but for ordinary Christians, it makes but little difference." I answer, if it is inconsistent for them, it is equally inconsistent for you; I say equally inconsistent; for, if you do not make such a profession, you ought to, and, hence, in view of your obligations to God and your own soul, you are just as inconsistent as they. Besides, if, as you say, "it makes but little difference," that little is the fearful one of obedience or disobedience. Let eternity say whether such a difference is little or great. "But we do not expect to obey in every little particular." Then, I reply, you are founding your hopes of heaven upon a deathbed repentance, concerning these little particulars; or you are just as really presuming upon God's mercy to save you. notwithstanding these defects, as is the believer in universal salvation.

Now, how many wrongs can a professing Christian be guilty of, and yet entertain well-grounded hopes of heaven? Answer: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men."—Rev. iv. 18. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."—James ii. 10. Guilty, in a two-fold sense: first, of the spirit which leads to the violation of all; and, second, of the influence which tends to the same result. The gospel law must be kept in every particular, or there is no hope for us without

repentance: for "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

2d. Because it is a constant violation of covenant vows. To what extent may vows of church relationship be innocently broken? All such vows are two-fold in their character. They are solemn vows to God, and equally solemn compacts with our fellow-men. "Vow and pay unto the Lord your God," is the language of Scripture, contemplating and admitting no violation whatever of our vows to him. Compacts may be conditional and repealable, or unconditional and unrepealable. In the last case, such compacts cannot be innocently broken. Such is the nature of the church compacts implied in vows of church relationship. "Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works; the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them ?" Answer: "I renounce them all." This is the baptismal vow. A condition of church membership is, that the candidate shall have been baptized, and, of course, by plain implication, is living in the performance of the baptismal vow. This is a vow which can never be broken with God, because it is founded upon unchanging rights; and it is a compact with the Church universal in baptism, and with the particular branch of the Church with which the candidate unites, and which can never be repealed.

Again, our general rules, to which every member

solemnly subscribes, are most explicit. They require us "to do no harm; to avoid evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced," etc. Not "to put on gold or costly apparel," etc. All these, as founded upon the just relations subsisting between men in church or Christian fellowship, can never be annulled, whatever may become the moral character of the individual.

Perhaps there is no sophism more generally acted upon than this, viz., that the obligations of an individual are measured by his character, e. g., the backslider considers himself exempt from Christian duty, because he does not possess the Christian character. It is a great mistake. Obligations are eternal and immutable, and no change of character can ever abrogate them. We thence conclude, that such vows and compacts can never be innocently broken. Yet every person who practices what we condemn in this article, is guilty of the violation of his baptismal vow, and his vows of class connection and church relationship. Let such tell us upon what principle they claim the honor of the Christian name, while they still persist in such a course.

3d. Because its first principle and sustaining energy is pride of heart.

This proposition will be stoutly denied. Few will acknowledge a care for such ornaments, much less pride in them. Yet no amount of persuasion will induce them to

lay them aside. And if the propriety of discontinuing their use be but hinted, the impatient or defiant glance, or scornful smile, prove how little they are regarded. Little as it is, they will sooner forfeit the esteem, and pain the hearts of fellow-Christians, or their ministers, than forego it.

Others assert that they wear them "for the sake of the giver." But would they use a lottery or theatre ticket because it was a gift? Would they wear a stolen watch because a present? Why, then, make so great a distinction, when there is no difference? He who uses money for such purposes robs God, and she who wears the purchased article shares in the iniquity. The truth is, this very trust in such shallow pretenses proves conclusively that the love of the thing lies beneath; and, however much it may be concealed from the individual, pride, and pride alone, is the foundation; as the universal judgment of mankind asserts—there let the stigma rest, and let they who will assume it.

Others wear them, "because they look so much better with them." I have supposed that when the poet said,

"Beauty when unadorned Is adorned the most,'

he uttered a philosophical truth, as well as a gem of nhetoric; but it seems that now that truth is obsolete, and beauty needs a little fixing up to be passable. "Oh no,

the really beautiful do not need such things, but plain kind of people!" Well, let us have a distinct understanding; only the homely, then, need wear such adornments; so that the fact of wearing them is to be considered as an acknowledgment that you are-not beautiful! But is the reason valid? If so, let us act upon the suggestion, and bid our ministers to preach only when the truth can have such important accessories as good looks always give; and if the comeliness is not there by the stamp of nature, why, let the jeweler supply the defect. How much more graceful a jeweled hand would look, waving in oratorical gesticulations during each polished period of a discourse, than the plain, unadorned hands of our present ministers. What a vast improvement, too, might be made by just supplanting the plain bosom buttons with the golden studs, and adorning it with a splendid pin! How nicely, too, a heavy chain would contrast with the jetty color of his vest; and how brilliantly the goldenheaded cane would flash back the reflected rays from the jeweled rings. Oh, that would be superb! And with what a grace he would then rise, and preach from "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," etc., after singing that beautiful hymn:

"While in this region here below,
No other good will I pursue;
I'll bid this world of noise and show,
With all its glittering snares, adieu."

And if the world should dare to hint that he was not just right, every member could at once reply, "O, he looks so much better!" and this would be the spell that should effectually silence all objections. But, seriously, Christian, can you afford to "look better" externally, at the expense of the guilt necessarily induced in breaking a command of God?

Another wears them "because she likes to see them." So may she also like to see a dance, or a play at the theatre; but would she therefore dance, or attend the theatre? Yet these are not as plainly prohibited as is the very course she is pursuing, in wearing these adornments. "Oh! consistency, thou art a jewel!"

4th. Because it is depreciating their character in the estimation of the world. Bad as the world is, it still admires religious principle, and makes the inconsistent professor of it smart beneath the scourge of its ridicule. When we were of the world, we regarded such practices as unbecoming in the Christian; and, rest assured, the world is no more lenient, or erring in its judgment now, than then. The unconverted and the ill-disposed love to make such fashionable professors the scape-goats for their iniquity, and they always intrench themselves behind their defects, for safety from the shafts of conviction or remorse. The Church feels this in all her borders, and hence arises the despondent cry—"We can never prosper with such professors in our midst." A monstrous wrong

is here! and common honesty ought to lead such professors to forsake their evil practices, or leave the Church, that she may no longer be stigmatized by their example.

We have before referred to the importance of consistent Christian example, and here recall it, in order to present it as our *chief reliance* in the aggressive movements of Christianity. As such, God designed it ever to be considered, and hence He so strongly insists upon it. Next to the direct agency of his own Spirit, this is the hope and the dependence of the Church, and the salvation of the world. Whatever, then, mars this example, undermines, to the same extent (if not the foundation stones, at least), the supporting pillars of the world's hope.

5th. Because it is a sinful use of the Lord's property.

We here assume that no one has a moral right to spend a single penny, except in accordance with God's will. Is it, then, in harmony with his will, to violate his own command? "Whose adorning let it not be," etc.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."
"The silver and the gold are his," and you, poor mortal, have nothing, absolutely nothing, in your own right. That which you possess is only loaned for a time, and if your Lord, when He shall come, finds that you have squandered the means which, if faithfully employed, might have saved priceless souls, fearful will be the account of your stewardship! With what an accusing voice does our empty Missionary treasury plead, as its mighty claims, freigh

with immortal destinies, are turned aside by the silver sixpence, while tens or hundreds of shining dollars might be substituted, by casting the useless and forbidden adornments at the foot of the Cross!

How few there are but what have the price of a soul upon their person! If you knew that every \$18 which you give would save a soul, how would you spend your money? Yet statistics show this to be a fact.

O Christian! consider this matter well: eternal interests may rest upon the use of a single dime!

6th. Because it is practically estimating the fashions of the world as of greater value than the souls of brethren, and personal innocence!

There are always some who are liable to be hindered, or turned aside, by such examples. They are conscious that they cannot indulge in such things themselves, yet they see almost the whole example of the Church against them; and they soon conclude that it is over-righteousness in them to be so scrupulous. They yield; the con science is enthralled, and they suffer loss, or perhaps go back to the world.

Others, seeing such inconsistency, cannot admit that the true Christian would be guilty of it; and hence denounce all such, as self-deceived, or willful hypocrites; and thus their charity is blasted, and Satan gains a fearful advantage over them. Would it not be well to ask, not whether we can practice such things with no injury to

ourselves; but "can we do it with no injury to others?" St. Paul declares such injury to another to be "sin against the brother, and sin against Christ!"

"But take heed lest this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any one see thee, which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him that is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols, and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died. But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."—1 Cor. viii. 9-12. The facts referred to in 'this language were as follows. Many of those to whom the Apostle wrote, were converted Gentiles. While heathen, they had considered meat offered to their idols as sacred: and after their conversion, they thought that if such meat were eaten, it must be as sacred to the idol still. Others, who felt that "an idol is nothing in the world," regarded such meat as common like other meat, and to be eaten with no more scruples. But the Apostle prohibits it, "lest the conscience of him that is weak (i. e. who regarded it as sacred still) be emboldened," etc. We have been thus particular on this passage, because it involves a great principle, of equal force in all ages, viz., "That the lawfulness of men's actions, depends not solely, either upon the lawfulness of the subject matter, nor upon the conscience of the doers of them, considered in itself, but

as considered with reference to the conscience of others, to whom, by the law of charity, they are bound so to behave themselves, as by none of their actions to give them occasion of sin."—Stackhouse, Body of Divinity.

This principle might be abundantly confirmed by an appeal to other scriptures were it necessary, but let us make the application. Even granting for the moment that this practice is right in itself, and meets the approval of your conscience, still you have no right to do it if it wounds the conscience of a brother; for, by so doing, you "sin against him, and sin against Christ."

It will not do to demur against this; for God has said it! and with him be your quarrel; not with me.

7th. Because it is an open violation of the important Scripture precept, "avoid the appearance of evil."

The necessity of observing this precept may be seen in a single consideration. As we have no other measure by which to judge men, we are compelled to judge of them by what they openly seem to be, rather than by what they inwardly are. Therefore, if the appearance be evil, our esteem and confidence are lost, and consequently the greatest avenue of good to the soul is obstructed. Whether we can innocently deprive ourselves of the probability of the good supposed, is exceedingly questionable; setting aside the guilt of neglecting a Divine injunction. But this, too, must be considered by those who must give an account to the Judge of quick and dead.

8th. It is plainly transgressing a Divine command, stated with all possible clearness, and enforced with peculiar earnestness. We allude to the passages at the commencement of this article, 1 Tim. ii. 9-10, and 1 Peter iii. 3-4. To show that there is no possibility of evading the force of these commands, and that they are binding upon all who profess the religion of Christ, and that he who tramples upon them, does it at his peril, let us inquire—what degree of respect should we render to the express prohibitions of Scripture, and how far may we qualify them in our interpretations? In regard to the first part of the inquiry, it is evident that a prohibition emanating from the same source, and attended with the same sanctions, is equally authoritative as an express command. The Decalogue itself places this beyond question, for eight of the ten commandments are in the form of prohibitions.

As to the interpretation which we are to give to such, a high authority has said:—"I hold it for a most infallible rule in expositions of sacred Scripture, that when a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is commonly the worst. There is nothing more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art, which changeth the meaning of words, as alchemy doth, or would do, the substance of metals; maketh of everything what it listeth, and bringeth in the end all truth to nothing."—See Hooker's Eccl. Polity, book 5, chap. 59.

Dr. Peck, before quoting the above, says :-- "Language

is always to be understood in its literal or natural sense, unless there is something in the nature of the subject to which it is applied which requires the restricted meaning." Applying this rule to the subject before us, we conclude that the passages with which we commenced signify only what the words, used in their plain, natural, obvious meaning convey, and all that meaning, without evasion or limitation. To this it may be objected—"that they were undoubtedly intended to be understood thus, at the time they were written, but were not designed to be of perpetual obligation."

In reply we may state another rule of interpretation. (See Horne's Introduction abridged, p. 152.) "Negatives are binding at all times; that is, we must never do that which is forbidden, though good may ultimately come from it."

Another consideration which shows it to be of general application is, it was first written by Peter to all Christians, and, about four or five years afterwards, was deemed of sufficient importance to form a part of St. Paul's instructions to Timothy, as pastor of the Church at Ephesus; thus giving it a fresh sanction, and rendering it obligatory upon the ministry to enforce the rule given for the government of all.

Besides, the same reasons exist for it now as then. In confirmation of all the above, it may be well to consider the fact, that no such moral text ever has but one mean-

ing: which meaning is to be ascertained just as we would that of any other writing, viz.: by the whole scope of the context, taken in connection with the general sentiments of the writer. The scope is here plainly announced, to "win the husband," see 1 Peter iii. 1; and in order to do this, they are to behold "your chaste conversation, coupled with fear," "whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, of wearing of gold, or of putting on of (costly) apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price." "For after this manner. in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves," etc. Let common sense say which would be the most likely to win the husband or others from the world to Christ, the exhibition of the spirit of vanity, which loves to be decked in the gaudy trappings of the world, or the meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price! The general sentiments of the writer, none can deny, favor a total separation from the world, in spirit and in practice.

It would be needless to quote passages in illustration of the fact, see chap. i. 13, 14, chap. ii. 9–12, chap. iv. 1–3, etc. We conclude, then, that if there is any meaning at all in those passages, it is that which is borne out upon the very face of the words employed, and we have no right to bend them to any other.

By what authority can any one expunge this commandment from the sacred oracles, or, what is equivalent to it, explain away its force, and make it a mere form of words, with no meaning and no sanction? Let such beware, lest he practically bring upon himself the curse denounced against such as "take away from the words of the book," etc., Rev. xxii. 19.

Others justify themselves by quoting scriptural example. They point to the splendid ritual and magnificent accompaniments of the Mosaic dispensation, and triumphantly read, in the costly fabrics, and golden ornaments, and gem-set decorations of the consecrated priesthood, the Divine sanction for their use in all coming time:—forgetting alike that that was a system of types and shadows, and symbols, and externals, while ours is the very reverse in all, and besides is guarded against such an unwarrantable implication by the express prohibition of our Lord. As well advocate the whole social system of the Jews—polygamy, concubinage and all—as rest the justification of this practice upon their example. Since, then, the argument from this example proves too much, we may pass it by as proving nothing.

9th. It is one of the greatest obstructions to God's cause that now exists.

An evil that paralyzes almost every arm, and palsies the energy of nearly all good influence, and threatens at no distant day to obliterate all the landmarks of vital Christianity, must be of sufficient magnitude to awaken the earnest solicitude of every true lover of the sacred cause. Were it confined to a small locality, or to a single class, it might be uprooted, or at least curtailed in its progress and restrained in its influence.

But pervading, as it does, all places, and commanding the hosts of every rank, it spreads its tides of desolating worldliness wherever the cross casts its shadow, and triumphs most within the sacred precincts of God's own sanctuary. Its upas breath is everywhere, instilling its subtile poison into the life-current of the young convert, and transforming his warm, active zeal, and earnest prayers, and burning love, into the cold, apathetic breathings and fitful starts of this charnel dream-land of his soul: and it calls the myriads of modern Israel to dance around the Golden Calf of their own making, while their offended God from Sinai beholds their base ingratitude. O! "when will He arise to shake terribly the earth?"

But the remedy! Where is that? Chiefly, fellow-Christians, in you! The Church authorities may, and ought to do something to prevent all such accessions to her membership hereafter; but they already swarm within her pale. Let your light shine. Be the first to renounce the unhallowed practice, and ere long the sacred leaven will work out through the masses of the Church and purify the whole. Ministers have here a most solemn duty. "Not to mend our rules, but keep them," is one of our acknowl-

edged obligations; yet, in the face of it, we have been filling up the Church with those who do not, and never did keep them! Verily, there is recreancy somewhere that should make us blush, and consider well whither we are tending!

#### "THE WORLD OF FASHION.

"We are not now for the first time to learn that this subject is one upon which it is difficult for a religious journal to touch without giving offense; a hopeless one, perhaps, where the incurable frenzy of the multitude renders the reform, even of the few. a desperate enterprise. What can be said of the morality of this fantastic ornament, that ridiculous deformity, and the other hideous appendage, which would have any weight? It is vain to discuss the moral evil in the fatal constraint applied here, and the frightful enlargement made there, and the disgusting transformation of God's beautiful workmanship which fashion effects everywhere. It is in vain to appeal to the standard which God, nature. and common sense have approved. Their opinions on the point are all chaff when they conflict with the decrees of those whom fashion dubs with the magnificent and imposing title of the world. The reply to all that is urged is the stereotyped one: "We may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion." It is in vain to return for answer, and to prove that to be in fashion is the readiest way to get out of the world. Every man's eye gives ocular demonstration of it. Every member of the medical faculty, at home and abroad, would qualify to the fact under oath. Many a dissection has furnished the proof; many a deathbed of the young and lovely has told the mournful tale; many an early grave has uttered its fearful warnings. What is all this but chaff when opposed to the despotism of fashion?

If it were an army of barbarians that had invaded our land, and were cutting off in their bloom the thousands whom God in-

tended to be the mothers of the next generation, we would meet them with well-appointed armies, and send them quickly into the nit: if it were the pestilence, we would fast, and pray, and weep; if it were Christianity herself that demanded one-half of such human sacrifices, the alleged authority of Heaven could not support it against the indignation of pitving humanity, and it would perish amid the cry that would echo from the Atlantic to the Pacific. But lo! since the wide-spreading destruction is dealt out by a few hundreds of the silliest people in Paris and London, the besotted worshipers of this "goddess of semblance and of shade," we must submit in silence—and our daughters must die! Religion would have something to say in the premises, if her voice were worth listening to. Pity and humanity would speak, if they could be heard: but since their influence cannot reach the case, it is to be wished that the pride of Christian women might be invoked. That may perhaps save them. A proper pride might make them wish to appear comely in the eyes of the other sex. Well, then, let them have the good taste to remain as God made them. God does not make women as Isaiah describes them (chapter iii. 16, etc.), nor the deformities into which modern dressmakers torture them. These are the creations of fashion, which brings everything into vogue by turns, but good sense, decency, and virtue; and pride, if nothing else, one might suppose, would prompt the modest and virtuous to scorn to imitate fashion's votaries, since those votaries scorn their imitations.

"Observe, moreover, the origin and cause of these constant and capricious changes. A clique of that minority, in Paris or London, which claims the arrogant title of the world, and to whom the majority of womankind are a cipher, wishing to distinguish themselves as well by their dress as by their other and more groveling follies, by and with the advice of a council of "artists," fix upon the fashions for the month, and the more wasteful and expensive the better, for that would make imitation the more difficult. The next class below seize upon it, and the bulletin of fashion comes out in the papers. It is marked, learned.

digested, and obeyed, first by the devotees of the "weakest folly, but the strongest faith." Then grave Christian women flaunt out in the new modes. Then the wave rolls outward to the towns and villages, crosses the Atlantic, imposes its burden on millions of the high and low, and rolls away to the prairies and cabins of the West. But before it has half completed its tour, the proud dames who brought the "mufflers, the bonnets, the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins," etc., into vogue, have made a new change, for why should the millionaire put on a suit of apparel which has been desecrated by the common herd? So the new wave of fashion follows its predecessor. Still another follows next month, and another, and another. The leaders of the ton are running as fast as they can to keep out of the way of the "vulgar," whom they despise; and the "vulgar" are running as fast as they can in the career of imitation to keep up with the leaders who despise them. Thus, month after month, and year after year, is this preposterous chase kept up, at the expense of countless millions, at the sacrifice of moral principle, time, comfort, health, and life, and to the disgrace of the Christian name. And they that run in this race have, when it ends, to give an account of themselves to God! To what conclusion, then, does such a view bring us? It is mad to follow fashion; it may be rash to oppose her, but it is neither rash nor mad to despise her. Let her votaries, if they will pay to her the passive and implicit service which she exacts; but Christian women should scorn to follow their lead, and renouncing this despicable and hurtful vanity, take care to dress, as well as conduct themselves, with the simplicity and gravity which become their purer character and diviner hopes."-Protestant Churchman.

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